



2809645270



**“MULTIPLE HISTORICITIES”**  
**ON THE ISLAND OF CRETE:**

**THE SIGNIFICANCE**  
**OF MINOAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE**  
**IN EVERYDAY LIFE**

***Esther Solomon***

***University College London***

***Submitted for the degree of***  
***Doctor of Philosophy***

***2007***

UMI Number: U592415

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI U592415

Published by ProQuest LLC 2013. Copyright in the Dissertation held by the Author.  
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This work is protected against  
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.



ProQuest LLC  
789 East Eisenhower Parkway  
P.O. Box 1346  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346



## *Abstract*

This thesis seeks to investigate the manifold ways people, as members of different groups, understand, narrate and relate to the prehistoric past of the island of Crete, i.e., what is usually referred to as “Minoan heritage”. It explores the various contexts in which Knossos, the best-known and most popular Minoan site in Crete, is “historicised” through experience and perception both inside and outside the boundaries of the site.

The research focuses on the ways academic knowledge concerning the archaeological heritage is embedded in social practices. Its aim is to understand ancient Cretan monuments and museum exhibits as active producers of meanings affecting and being affected by current social relations. For this purpose, social anthropology and material culture studies in particular lent me the theoretical and methodological tools to bring archaeology, museums and people into the same field of inquiry.

The making of a contested monumental landscape around the archaeological site of Knossos, the appropriation and conceptualisation of Minoan Crete through its official representations, the quest for authenticity during the tourist experience, the performance of local identity in relation to the archaeological heritage, the socially made distinctions between the local, the national and the global, and the diverse associations of Knossos with concepts of tradition and modernity are important themes in this research, all related to a heavily idealised conception of Minoan Crete, produced by the major excavator of Knossos, Sir Arthur Evans, at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The thesis is completed with a discussion on Archanes, a Cretan village ten kilometres south of Knossos, where significant Minoan finds and buildings have been unearthed in the last decades. By connecting them to a recently completed conservation programme of local architecture and the “rediscovery of tradition” now occurring in the village, I have attempted to trace the diverse inscriptions of this “emergent” ancient past onto social memory and related identity discourses.

***Remembering***

***My grandmother  
Anna Ovadia Nathan***

***(1916-2004)***

## Acknowledgements

There are many people to be thanked for their help in the creation and the conclusion of this thesis but my debt to my informants at Archanes, Knossos and Heraklion and everyone else who graciously agreed to talk with me should be mentioned first. Not only because these people spent some of their time and shared their views with me but also because they allowed me to enter their lives for a while, making my stay in Crete so interesting, stimulating and immensely rewarding.

Special thanks have to go to the local *ΟΛΛΗΝΙΚΟΙ* people of Archanes for their generous treatment of me and my partner, who also shared the experience in the *ΠΥΧΗ ΜΟΥ* their remarkable generosity; Mrs Maria Prokoudaki for making us feel so welcome in the Archaniote quarter of Foudhara, and the Galanatos family for the kind hospitality in Heraklion and their warm welcome during my first contact with the island in 2000.

Many people have provided me with assistance during the Cretan years, making it possible to meet the demands and opportunities of the PhD: the librarian Maria Georgiades of the Vikela's library in Heraklion showed variable patience during the one and a half years of my "inquiries as needed" in the local newspapers; Stella Galani and Vasiliki Apostolakis introduced me to the world of tourist guides; the president and the members of the Heraklion Association of Tour Guides allowed me to follow the guided groups of tourists to Knossos and the Museum of Heraklion; the local authorities of Archanes and especially Mr Stavros Armatoulakis, former mayor of the village, for their help and provision of archival material; and of course Prof. Vassilis Sakellariou, Elena Kriakou, former curator at the Knossos annex of the British Archaeological School and the archaeologist of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Inspectorate of Antiquities in Heraklion, who shared with me their views on the practice of Archaeology in Crete, especially in the areas of Archanes and Knossos.

The Irish Scholarship Foundation of George H. E. VI financed work on this thesis for one and a half years. The Foundation's supervisor Prof. G. Kovacs apart from his

## *Acknowledgements*

There are many people to be thanked for their help in the creation and the conclusion of this thesis but my debt to my informants at Archanes, Knossos and Heraklion and everyone else who graciously agreed to talk with me should be mentioned first. Not only because these people spent some of their time and shared their views with me but also because they allowed me to enter their lives for a while, making my stay in Crete so interesting, stimulating and immensely rewarding.

Special thanks have to go to the teachers Maria Stivaktaki and Rena Tahataki; the people of Archanes for their generous treatment of me and my partner, who also shared the experience in the village; my neighbours for their remarkable generosity; Mrs Maria Fragioudaki for making us feel so welcome in the Archaniote quarter of Troullos; and the Balamoutsos family for the kind hospitality in Heraklion and their warm welcome during my first contact with the island in 2000.

Many people have provided me with assistance during the Cretan years, making it possible to meet the demands and opportunities of the PhD: the librarian Minas Georgiadis in the Vikelaia library of Heraklion showed valuable patience during the one and a half years of my “mysterious searches” in the local newspapers. Stella Galani and Vaggelis Apostolakis introduced me to the world of tourist guides; the president and the members of the Herakliote Association of Tour Guides allowed me to follow the guided groups of tourists tours at Knossos and the Museum of Heraklion; the local authorities of Archanes and especially Mr Stavros Arnaoutakis, former mayor of the village, for their help and provision of archival material; and of course Prof. Yannis Sakellarakis, Eleni Hatzaki, former curator at the Knossos annex of the British Archaeological School and the archaeologists of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Inspectorate of Antiquities in Heraklion, who shared with me their views on the practice of Archaeology on Crete, especially in the areas of Archanes and Knossos.

The State Scholarship Foundation of Greece (I.K.Y) financed work on this thesis for three and a half years. The Foundation’s supervisor Prof. G. Korres apart from his

support also provided me with numerous newspaper clippings and articles about Knossos and Evans. I thank him.

There are several intellectual debts I have accumulated in the planning and execution of this study which perhaps amount to a genealogy too complex to mention adequately.

First of all, I am particularly indebted Dr Eleana Yalouri, who, after the completion of my studies in Museology at UCL, showed me the way to the Department of... Anthropology. I thank her for her friendship and support and mainly for the endless discussions we had in England, where we shared thoughts, comments and criticisms on anthropological readings.

I have also benefited enormously from the long conversations I had with people who fostered my way of thinking about the past, its material remains and the meaning of cultural landscapes, especially Prof. Michael Rowlands from UCL, Mr Christos Poulos and Dr K. Sueref. I also wish to thank Prof. M. Herzfeld for an exceptionally helpful discussion we had at the Santa Maria Maggiore quarter in Rome and, finally, Mr Sotiris Demetriou. To the latter I am also grateful for reading an earlier draft of the thesis and making useful comments.

At this point, I must single out my supervisor, Prof. Christopher Tilley. My interest in his work and ideas long predated the start of this thesis. As an MA student in Sheffield I passionately read his (and M. Shanks') *Reconstructing Archaeology*, and I continued to do so until I decided to meet him, several years afterwards. Having him as a supervisor was a great honour and pleasure. I am grateful to him for his help, guidance and positive comments, also for his support in the period during which I revised the thesis; but most of all, for the inspiration and great intellectual stimulation he has offered to me for so long. Many thanks, Chris.

A deep debt is owed to my friends in England, in Greece and in Italy for being at my side at several critical moments. Also, Rea Kakaboura, Danae Ferri, Lila Soussi, Kostas Stamoulis, Vicky Kontou, Millie Williams and Kathleen Hart for their support in different times and ways. And, not least, Eleni Georgiou, whose narration

on a summer day in 1999 of her experience at the archaeological site of Mycenae in the Peloponnese contributed a great deal to my decision to explore the relationship people develop with ancient monuments.

Mrs Lela Kalogianni offered me her lovely cottage house in the village of Kalyvitis on Mt Helmos. Thanks to her and her family, in that tiny Peloponnesian village I found the serenity and peacefulness I needed in order to think of my Cretan experience and write up most chapters of the thesis.

Few words can render my gratitude to my parents. Elly and Makis Solomon have assisted immeasurably. Their love has followed me all these years together with that of my extended family including Aunt Nina who passed away a few days before the first submission of the thesis and whom I did not greet as I had wished.

Finally and fittingly enough for a piece of writing which is also about memory, the fieldwork for this thesis was marked by the return of a friend from my early adolescence who came to see me after many years of absence. Memory then played tricky games and life followed paths that I could not imagine. To this friend, Evie Hatziharalambous, I owe my gratitude for making life so beautiful and sharing almost every idea and feeling concerning this work.

Last, but certainly not least, I wish to thank my partner Yannis Kalogiannis. He has also been a partner in the journey of this PhD for a long time before it began. As it is difficult to put my feelings into words, I simply left his name to be acknowledged at this point, which is also, I hope, the long-desired start of a common life together.

## **AND AN ADDITIONAL NOTE**

After the successful conclusion of the national exams for archaeology graduates in 2005, I had to leave Athens, my home town and move to Thessaloniki in Northern Greece, where I have been working as museologist at the city's Archaeological Museum. Life has changed a lot since then but the thesis had to be revised and the available free time for such a difficult task was very limited. It is due to the great understanding and support shown by my colleagues as well as by the museum's director Dr P. Veleni that I finally managed to conclude the revisions. I am grateful to them all for their extraordinary kindness.

## *Contents*

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>List of Figures</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Preface</b>	<b>24</b>
 <b>Introduction</b>	 <b>26</b>
I. DEALING WITH “HERITAGE”	30
II. ANCIENT GREECE: THE WEIGHT OF THE PAST	33
III. THIS STUDY: THE CRETAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE IN LOCAL SOCIAL CONTEXTS	39
III.a. THE “GREAT ISLAND”	41
III.b. SOME MINOAN “PECULIARITIES”	46
IV. METHODOLOGY	50
- Aspects of the fieldwork	50
- Living in Archanes	54
V. THE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS	56
 <b>Chapter 1</b>	
 <b>SIR ARTHUR EVANS (1851-1941) AND THE “CONSTRUCTION” OF MINOAN HISTORY</b>	 <b>58</b>
I. THE RECENT HISTORY OF AN ANCIENT LEGEND	58
II. SETTING THE SCENE	61
- The background of Evans’s discoveries (1893-1900)	61
- Evans’s presence at Knossos	62
III. INTERPRETING BRONZE AGE CRETE	64
- Myth and archaeological reality: The power of “Minoan” terminology and palace models	64



	10
- A peaceful and harmonious society	66
- Other aspects: Anti-classicism and the notion of “Europeanness” in all things Minoan	68
IV. IMAGES OF KNOSSOS PRODUCED BY EVANS: “POETIC REALITIES THAT ARCHAEOLOGY REVEALS”	70
- Restoration work	71
CONCLUSIONS	74

## Chapter 2

<b>“MINOAN ENCOUNTERS”: OFFICIAL AND POPULAR REPRESENTATIONS OF KNOSSOS</b>	<b>75</b>
1. THE PRESENTATION OF MINOAN ANTIQUITY	77
I. OFFICIAL ATTEMPTS	77
- Site interpretation at Knossos; its impact	77
II. INTERMEDIATE MARKERS: TOUR GUIDES AND GUIDEBOOKS	80
- The historical confirmation of the “royal” myth	80
- Minoan life and social organisation	82
- Past and present in a whole	83
III. POWERFUL IMAGES: BROCHURES AND POSTCARDS	85
- Aspects of the iconographic discourse on Knossos	87
2. MINOAN ANTIQUITY AND THE DOMAIN OF PUBLIC CULTURE	90
I. EMBLEMS AND ICONIC ELEMENTS	92
II. ACTIVITIES BASED ON ANCIENT THEMES: COLLECTIVE SELF-DISPLAY AND PERFORMATIVE MEMORY	95
- Variations: The figure of Zeus	98
III. COMMERCIAL CULTURE	102
- The relation of Minoan imagery to some special commodities: oil and wine	104
CONCLUSIONS	108

## Chapter 3

<b>KNOSSOS AND THE TOURIST EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>110</b>
- Tourism in Crete	112
- Some theoretical and methodological concerns	114
I. GAZING AT KNOSSOS	117
- “Archetypical” quests	117
- Questions of taste	120
- The influence of the ancient myths	124
II. KNOSSOS AS OBJECTIFICATION OF CRETE	127
III. AUTHENTICITY “IN DANGER”: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RESTORATION WORK AT KNOSSOS	131
- A “staged event”, a “simulacrum”, or a “fascinating tourist sight”?	131
- The social connotations of reinforced concrete: The presence of a “polluting” element inside the archaeological site	137
CONCLUSIONS	141

## Chapter 4

<b>KNOWLEDGE PUT TO USE: MINOAN ANTIQUITIES IN CULTURAL TOPOGRAPHIES OF CRETE</b>	<b>145</b>
- Trying to infiltrate people’s collected stories	147
I. MINOAN CIVILISATION AND ASPECTS OF “CRETANNESS”	148
I. THE CONTENT OF HISTORICAL PERCEPTIONS	148
- “Everything started in Crete”	148
- The “Minoan Greeks”, the Dorian “prelude” and the historical tribal sequence	152
II. FROM “HISTORY” TO AN EMBODIED “TRADITION”: MINOAN HISTORY AND LOCAL CUSTOMS	156
III. THE MINOAN PAST AS “PROPERTY”	163
III.a. ANTIQUITIES AS MATERIAL PROPERTY: THE PROTESTS IN FRONT OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM IN FEBRUARY 1979. THEN AND NOW	167
- Remembering the events	169

	12
- Explaining them	172
- Changed mentalities in a globalised world: Antiquities travelling in exhibitions abroad	175
IV. “US AND THEM”: HISTORICAL COMPARISONS WITHIN THE GAME OF IDENTITY POLITICS	178
- Local (Cretan) – Global	180
2. THE MINOAN PAST AS A SHARED RESOURCE OF HUMANISTIC VALUES	183
I. “MINOAN LESSONS”	183
II. GENDERED DISCOURSES: MINOAN CRETE AS A MODEL OF EQUALITY AND PARTNERSHIP	188
III. “SACRED” KNOSSOS: METAPHYSICAL AND ESOTERIC USES	192
- Minoan worship and its relation to other cultures	194
- The New Age meanings: trying to find a universal truth at the antipodes of decadent Western values	196
CONCLUSIONS	200

## Chapter 5

<b>MODERN AND ANCIENT KNOSSOS: A GEOGRAPHY OF CONFLICT</b>	<b>205</b>
I. LABILE VALUES OF SPACE IN THE KNOSSIAN LANDSCAPE	208
- A picture of the life in the area around the monument	208
- “The antiquities have destroyed our lives”: Resentment among the inhabitants of modern Knossos	211
- Surveillance, tensions and scepticism	214
- A state “intrusion” into kinship and other local social relations	217
- Opposite views from outside the village	220
- State ambiguity and the interplay between “social and monumental time” at Knossos	223
II. THE NEGOTIATION OF STATE POWER	228
- Antagonism over the reading of “historical” aesthetics: modernity and tradition as pursued within the same space	228
- Appropriate interventions: natural elements	231
- Other schemes of “resistance”	232
- “Matter out of place”?	236
- The reverse side of the dispute: Knossos as a localised monument	239
CONCLUSIONS	242

## Chapter 6

<b>ARCHANES: THE ROLE OF THE MINOAN PAST TO A CRETAN VILLAGE</b>	<b>246</b>
<b>1. THE PLACE</b>	<b>249</b>
I. LIFE IN THE VILLAGE	249
II. MT JUKTAS	253
III. HISTORY AND ECONOMY	255
IV. ARCHANES BETWEEN THE URBAN AND THE RURAL	259
V. ARCHANES AS “A SPECIAL PLACE”: COLLECTIVE REPRESENTATIONS	261
<b>2. THE MATERIAL HERITAGE</b>	<b>267</b>
I. MINOAN REMAINS	267
- Representing archaeological Archanes	268
II. THE ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE	271
- The background of the Archaniote neoclassicism	271
- 1950-1990: the alterations	272
- 1992-2002: The restorations and their significance	273
- The performance of tradition on communal spaces	275
III. TRADITION OFFERED TO CONSUMPTION: PRESENTING THE VILLAGE TO POTENTIAL VISITORS	278
<b>3. MEMORY, MATERIAL CULTURE AND THE DEBATING OF ARCHANIOTE TRADITION</b>	<b>281</b>
I. DEALING WITH THE RECENT PAST (MID-NINETEENTH – MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY)	283
- Archaniote houses and stone working: “Hard” memories	283
- The acceptance of the restoration programme by the Archaniote population: Practical aspects	286
- A “institutionalised” tradition: a new life for old houses and “authentically traditional” new spaces	290
- From relative oblivion to the re-enactment of history: The social impact of the restoration programme	292
- The rural landscape: From farming land to spectacle	294

II. VALUING THE MINOAN PAST: ITS INCORPORATION IN LOCAL TRADITIONS	297
- Constructing the meaning of continuity	297
III. DEALING WITH THE SCHOLARLY AUTHORITY	302
IV. BRINGING THE COLLECTIVE PAST INTO THE REALM OF PERSONAL AND FAMILY MEMORIES	306
- Remembering the presence of Sir Arthur Evans	306
- Material memories <i>extended</i> into a very long past	309
- Other material culture of a “longe durée”: Vathypetro and Mt Juktas	312
V. COUNTER-DISCOURSES ON THE MEANING OF TRADITION	314
- The <i>real traditions</i> or <i>cornerstones</i> of Archanes	317
CONCLUSIONS	320
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>324</b>
1. ISSUES OF TIME, PLACE AND IDENTITY	327
- “The Future of the Past”: Archanes and modern Knossos	330
2. A PLACE “OUTSIDE ALL PLACES”	334
3. THE REMARKABLE PERSISTENCE OF A VISION: THE “EDENIC ORDER” OF MINOAN CRETE	327
<b>References</b>	<b>340</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>385</b>
<b>Figures</b>	<b>395</b>

## *List of Figures*

**Fig. 1.** The archaeological site of Knossos: The “Palace” from the Southeast.

(Source: A. Vassilakis, Knossos, Athens: Adam Editions, n.d.: 12. Photographs by Y. Yiannelos, C. Adam.)

**Fig. 2.** Sir Arthur Evans in front of the North Entrance of Knossos.

(Source: Brown 1983: 73)

**Fig. 3.** Knossos in 1901. A large part of the palace was already unearthed. In the foreground, the houses of the modern settlement.

(Source: Brown 1983: 38)

**Fig. 4.** The *Throne Room* with its alabaster seat, its benches and some fresco fragments on the walls, as found in 1900.

(Source: Brown 1983: 44)

**Fig. 5.** During his life Evans ordered several copies of this chair. Here he stands between a jar and a cast of the Knossian throne. On the walls, reproductions of the restored frescoes. From an exhibition in Burlington House, London, 1936 of Evans’s Minoan collection.

(Source: Brown 1983: 16)

**Fig. 6.** Minoan cultural features worthy of attention in 1922. (Headline in the *American Weekly*, 13/11)

(Source: Farnoux 1996: 101)

**Fig. 7.** Graphic reconstruction of the North entrance to the palace, according to Evans. Watercolor by Piet de Jong. Today it is considered one of the most characteristic expressions of Art Deco. Together with other watercolours by de Jong it accompanies the exhibition of the Knossian finds at the Museum of Heraklion.

(Source: Farnoux 1996: 112)

**Fig. 8.** Minoan ladies having a chat in what Evans described as the “Queen’s apartments”. From Evans’s main publication, *The Palace of Minos* (1921-1936).

(Source: Farnoux 2003: 112)

**Fig. 9.** The restoration of the Grand Staircase, a major technical achievement (1905). Evans stands at the back wearing a white suit. Next to him, his assistants Mackenzie (with the pith helmet) and Doll.

**Fig. 10.** The Throne Room in 1900 and after its reconstruction with reinforced concrete in 1930.

(Source: Brown 1983: 52)

**Fig. 11.** The “South Propylaea” of Knossos as restored by Evans with a copy of the “Cup-bearer” fresco on the wall. The yellow concrete indicates the possible place of wooden beams in Bronze Age times.

(Postcard by V. Drossos)

**Fig. 12.** “The Prince with the Lilies” (or Priest-King), as seen today at the site of Knossos. Reconstruction by E. Gillieron fils, 1926. Published in “The Palace of Minos” (Vol. II, col. Pl. XIV).

(Source: Sherratt: 2000: 10)

**Fig. 13.** Proposed reconstruction as three separate figures by W.-D. Niemeier 1987.

(Source: Sherratt: 2000: 19)

**Fig. 14.** Wooden corridors defining the visitors’ itinerary.

(Source: Fakidis 1997)

**Fig. 15.** People queuing in front of the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion.

**Fig. 16.** The museum’s interior in the 1920s.

(Source: Farnoux 1996: 104)

**Fig. 17.** Graphic reconstruction of the Knossos Palace by G. Lappas and J. Sardelli (1984). (Consultants: N. Marinatos and R. Hägg.) The picture includes some dancers in front of the palace and implies a harmonious relationship between people and rulers (Klynne 1998: 7). The hanging gardens were added in front of the West façade without the consultants’ approval, perhaps a projection of Renaissance and present-day palaces. (Postcard and poster. Mathioulakis Editions)

**Fig. 18.** Cover of a guide on Crete.

(V. Drossos Editions)

**Fig. 19.** The golden pendant from Malia, Crete, at the centre of a tourist brochure on the area.

**Fig. 20 and 21.** Crete condensed around the North Entrance of Knossos  
(Postcards. Haitalis Editions)

**Fig. 22.** Cretan girls eating grapes. In the foreground, the site of Knossos.  
(Source Kofou 1989: 6)

**Fig. 23.** An encyclopaedic volume on Crete.  
(Papageorgiou 2001, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1964)

**Fig. 24.** “Crete: The warm embrace of Europe” and its emblems.  
(Brochure. Prefecture of Heraklion)

**Fig. 25.** A montage combining Minoan art with the Cretan sea.  
(Brochure. Greek Tourism Organisation)

**Fig. 26.** The famous North Portico at Knossos.  
(Source: Eurokinissi)

**Fig. 27 and 28.** Aesthetic changes in the postcards of Knossos. Below: The “King’s Megaron” (1970s). Above: minimising the effect of the concrete by including the natural environment in the picture (late 1990s).  
(Both postcards by V. Drossos)

**Fig. 29.** The main gate of the Badisches Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe, during the exhibition “In the Labyrinth of Minos”, 27-1 to 29-4-2001. Minoan ideograms in official presentations of the “First High Civilisation in Europe”  
(Photo by the author)

**Fig. 30.** Minoan versus...neoclassical. From the same exhibition.  
(Photo by the author)



**Fig. 31.** The memorial at Heraklion (built in the 1920s) reproduces a building as seen on a Knossian fresco. The pitiful state of the memorial has contributed to its exclusion from everyday social practices.

(Source: Farnoux 2003: 38)

**Fig. 32, 33.** Receiving foreigners at the port of Heraklion. A “labyrinth” with altars and double axes was constructed on the occasion.

(Source: Local newspaper “Tolmi”, 17-11-2000, 1 and 7)

**Fig. 34.** “Copies of copies”: Knossos columns in a modern block of flats in the centre of Heraklion. (Photo by the author)

**Fig. 35.** Red columns in modern constructions.

**Fig. 36.** The Phaistos disk according to some specialists contains the ideograms of a song. Here it may well allude to the Cretan passion for music: “The Minoan music-school”. (Advertisement)

**Fig. 37.** Minoan signs (colour red, Phaistos disc, consecration horns) connoting the Cretan organisation of a commercial exhibition.

**Fig. 38.** Potters at work in 1910 as photographed by Evans’s assistants.

(Source: Brown 1983: 67)

**Fig. 39.** “Minoan Roots”. Presenting the art of the Thrapsaniote potters on a local newspaper.

(Source: Local newspaper “Tolmi”, 20-8-2002: 18)

**Fig. 40, 41.** Aesthetic and cultural syncretism: Minoan scenes and motifs combined with traditional folkloric patterns. From a children’s book on Minoan Crete.

(Source: Tahataki, n.d.: 64, 23)

**Fig. 42.** Procession from the “Minoan Ritual”. In the forefront a reproduction of the so-called “Tripartite Shrine” at Knossos.

(Source: Local newspaper “I Allagi” –Feb. 1997)

**Fig. 43.** Girls in Minoan costumes dancing the “geranos”.

(Source: From the programme of the show)

**Fig. 44.** Asking the hot question concerning the birthplace of Zeus: “In the Idean or the Dictaen (cave)?”

(From a local newspaper)

**Fig. 45.** Zeus and folk dances in a festival named after the recently discovered Greek-Orthodox saint of love, St Giacynthus. Giacynthia Festival, The Programme of cultural activities (2001).

**Fig. 46.** “Giacynthus and the Cretan lyre”: Gendered representations of a diachronic culture in the mountain communities of Milopotamos. The festival’s protagonists: dancers and drummers evoking the mythological Kouretes of the Idean cave. Psaradonis (above right), one of the best-known Cretan musicians, often called “The son of Zeus”. The role of the Church is implied by the presence of a priest (above left) while the olive tree in the middle providing an extra link to both ancient and recent Cretan culture.

(Source Newspaper “Eleftherotypia”, *Epsilon supplement*, June 2001: 24)

**Fig. 47, 48.** Minoan imagery on Cretan products: herbs, honey and wines.

**Fig. 49.** An old advertisement found in a local newspaper: “Pleasure means smoking the cigarettes ‘Knossos’”

(Source: “Local newspaper “Idi”, 9-5-1921: 1)

**Fig. 50.** Cretan recipe books.

(Advertisement)

**Fig. 51.** “Lose weight...critically (or in the Cretan way)”

(Advertisement)

**Fig. 52.** The most popular image of Knossos.

(Graphic reconstruction sold in poster)

**Fig. 53.** Sitting on the “Throne of Minos”: A Chinese official and his wife enjoying a rare privilege.

(Source: Eurokinnissi)

**Fig. 54.** 50 couples of newly-weds from Germany photographed in front of the North Portico.

(Source: Eurokinnissi)

**Fig. 55.** The Minoan antiquities in the headlines: “A Kamares ware vase was broken”. Concerns about the future of museum exhibits.

(Local Newspaper “I Allagi”, Feb. 1979)

**Fig. 56.** The funeral of the Minoan antiquities in the Museum of Heraklion. Cartoon by Andreadakis.

(Source: Local Newspaper “I Allagi”, 25-2-1979: 1)

**Fig. 57.** The protest. “The Antiquities belong to Us”.

(Source: Local newspaper “I Allagi”, 28-2-79: 1, photo by A. Koulatsoglou)

**Fig. 58.** “Incredible. Has Icarus become Italian?”

(Source: Local Newspaper “Nea Kriti”, 7-2-2002:1)

**Fig. 59.** “Greenaway kills Icarus once again...”

Cretans and Icarians in common meetings for the defence of the myth.

(Source: Newspaper “Ethnos”, 3-3-2002: 35)

**Fig. 60.** “Ariadnean 2002, Cultural events”. The Pamphlet with the *Parisienne* representing Cretan women.

**Fig. 61, 62.** The landscape of Knossos. Different perspectives from the hill of St Paraskevi. The view to the south (above) and around the palace (below).

(Photos by the author)

**Fig. 63.** Heraklion, ancient and modern Knossos (the settlement of Bougada Metochi): A difficult relationship.

**Fig. 64.** Borders within borders: The Northern part of the palace, the settlement of Makrytichos, the suburbs of Heraklion and the remaining space with... the olive groves. (Photos by the author)

**Fig. 65.** Knossos: the broader area around the archaeological site.

The palace, the river, the settlements of Makrytichos, and Bougadha (“Knossos”), Villa Ariadne, the Royal road (“The most Ancient one in Europe”), A Temple Tomb, the Little Minoan Palace and the road to Heraklion are indicated.

(Source: Michailidou 2002: 38)

**Fig. 66.** The town of Archanes.

(Source: Brochure published by the Local Council)

**Fig. 67.** Mt Juktas.

(Source: Logiadou-Platonos 1986: 20)

**Fig. 68.** Map showing part of the Heraklion District. Heraklion, Knossos, Archanes and Mt Juktas are highlighted.

(Source: Tzombanaki 2002: 28)

**Fig. 69.** Topographic map of Archanes.

(Source: Tzombanaki 2002: 14)

**Fig. 70.** The six major neighbourhoods of Archanes mentioned in the text. (Based on a map of Archanes appearing in Tzombanaki 2002: 38.

**Fig. 71.** Distribution of 54 *archondika* and important public buildings in Archanes. The importance of the “Nice Road” that crosses the village is obvious with several wealthy residences on both sides.

**Fig. 72.** The church of Panaghia. Archanes.

(Source: Kofou 1989: 138)

**Fig. 73.** The remains of the “palatial building” at Tourkogitonia, Archanes.

(Source: Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 2002: 27)

**Fig. 74.** The remains of a Minoan farmhouse. Vathypetro (Archanes).

(Source: Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 2002: 16)

**Fig. 75.** The wine press at Vathypetro.

(Source: Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 2002: 17)

**Fig. 76.** Remains of the cemetery at the hill of Fourni, Archanes.

(Source: Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 2002: 91)

**Fig. 77.** The entrance to the Tholos tomb A.

(Source: Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 2002: 73)

**Fig. 78.** The Temple of the human sacrifice at the site of Anemospilia, Archanes.

(Source: Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 2002: 139)

**Fig. 79.** Graphic reconstruction of the earthquake that destroyed the temple according to its excavator.

(Source: Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 2002: 147)

**Fig. 80.** The old school of Archanes, now housing the archaeological collection.

(Source: Tzombanaki 1992: 30)

**Fig. 81.** “Another Knossos has been discovered”. Newspaper “*Elftherotipia*”, *Geo magazine* (vol. 32, 18-11-2000).

**Fig. 82.** Neoclassical reminiscences in the organisation of space.

(Source: Acts Archanes 1992: 12)

**Fig. 83.** The use of stone in the Archaniote houses.

(Source: Tzombanaki 1992: 26)

**Fig. 84.** The programme of the village’s aesthetic upgrading: highlighting the use of stone.

(Source: Acts Archanes 1992: 193)

**Fig. 85.** Performing tradition on modern buildings.

(Source: Acts Archanes 1992: 172)

**Fig. 86.** The *archondiko* of Lydakis, Archanes.

(Source: Tzombanaki 1992: 25)

**Fig. 87.** The “rediscovery “of a traditional material: stone works as part of the conservation programme.

(Source: Municipality of Archanes)

**Fig. 88.** An old house wine-press transformed into a living room.

(Source: Doundoulaki-Oustamanolaki 1996: 54)

**Fig. 89.** Stone furniture at the court of an Archaniote house.

(Source: Doundoulaki-Oustamanolaki 1996: 55)

**Fig. 90.** Archanes “upgraded”. A backstreet.

(Photo by the author)

**Fig. 91.** Archaniote architecture as décor. Experiencing modern facilities at *Villa Archanes*. (Advertisement)

**Fig. 92, 93.** “Live the authenticity of Cretan hospitality and cooking.”

The revival of local traditions. (Advertisements)

**Fig. 94, 95.** “These are the origins of Cretans. The Minoans taught the Greek language... to the Greeks.” Poulianos’s study (1971) reproduced on the local magazine “Kriti”. Above, modern Archaniotes whose skulls were examined in the context of the same study.

**Fig. 96.** The Archaniote landscape (October 2005). Olive trees in the place of vines: “personal views” from the summit of Mt Juktas.

(Photo by the author)

## *Preface*

Every year in Greece archaeologists bring to light thousands of ancient objects and a significant number of new historical sites. Since the establishment of the modern Greek state in 1830, their activity has been supported and controlled by the state-operated Archaeological Service and to a lesser extent by university departments and foreign archaeological schools. Regardless of their provenance or aesthetic value, all ancient finds are treated as national heritage, constituting a great part of the symbolic, educational and economic wealth of the country. Beyond the excavations, an enormous amount of money and scientific effort is also spent for the conservation, display, storage, safeguarding and research of this increasing number of unearthed objects. Yet what is it all about? How is knowledge about the ancient past diffused outside the academic community forming a current historical culture? What *social* forms of knowledge do the ancient stones and artefacts actually constitute in the country justifying, confirming, transforming or even opposing the specialists' scientific efforts and the state's declared policy?

This thesis originates precisely from the need to trace the social meaning, impact and use of archaeological research in the Greek society. Its aim is to investigate some of the different social contexts in which antiquities are implicated in order to produce a link between the archaeological community and the society that actually supports the practice of archaeology.

For the purposes of such research, I felt that there was no better place to work than the island of Crete. This particular geographical entity of Greece is consistently seen as very special – even “*sui generis*” – for its culture, history, people's patriotism and strong localism; all the above are not unrelated to the reasons huge numbers of tourists visit the island every year.

On this island, one also encounters very special archaeological monuments. They belong to an archaeological culture, the Minoan, which flourished on Crete during the Bronze Age (2800-1400 BC). The Minoan monuments, especially Knossos – a place with very strong mythological connotations – have attracted enormous

scientific and popular interest since the beginning of the twentieth century. They are Crete's major tourist sights and affect many visitors' experiences of the island. They also constitute symbolic landscapes, the conservation of which is often contested as it comes into conflict with people's practical needs of housing and property use. Above all, however, these monuments form an endless source of pride and inspiration for the Cretan population and other social groups interested in Cretan antiquity. Cultural activities, public discourses, the establishment of a specific "Cretan" aesthetics, as well as the formation of local identity and cultural memory on the island are largely based on the evocation of this archaeologically retrieved past. This makes the ancient heritage of Crete a crucial part of the present. Of course, the Minoan material culture consists of objects which are three to four thousand year old; but because of these artefacts' strong and multifaceted impact on everyday practices and interaction, they are also pieces of modern material culture, whose social meaning is worth, I believe, being explored.



## ***Introduction***

*...history is not the prerogative of the historian, nor even, as post-modernism contends, a historian's "invention". It is, rather, a social form of knowledge; the work, in any given instance, of a thousand different hands. If this is true, the point of address in any discussion of historiography should not be the work of the individual scholar, not yet rival schools of interpretation, but rather the ensemble of activities and practices in which ideas of history are embedded or a dialectic of past-present relations is rehearsed.*

Samuel 1994: 8

In the last two decades, a burgeoning corpus of literature has arisen devoted specifically to the public uses of history. After the impressive increase of studies about the politics of the past, especially in the construction of national identity, the relevance of historical knowledge in current cultural contexts has become an open research field for historians, archaeologists and social scientists who study the "second life" of history, i.e., how people debate the (officially interpreted) past in the present and invest it with current social meanings.

However, the cultural construction of historical knowledge, or more generally of the knowledge of the past, written or not, and its social impact in the transmission of culture, regards all social formations literate or oral, modern and premodern (cf. Rowlands 1993). *Being in history* is a general cultural process which differs from place to place and from one socio-temporal context to another, as has been shown in recent historical and ethnographic accounts (Sahlins 1981, 1985, Borofsky 1987, Parmentier 1987, Connerton 1989, Tonkin et al. 1989, Comaroff and Comaroff 1992, Bloch 1998b). Moreover, important social phenomena related to nationalism and globalisation, such as the negotiation of ethnicity, the "production of locality" (Appadurai 1995), the effects of de-territorialisation and exile (Rapport and Dawson 1998) as well as the relation of all the above with the making of social identity and political action, have been explored through the significance of the past for the group

each time under study (see Handler 1988, Boyarin 1994, Tilly 1994, Macdonald 1997a, Hall 2000). Communities –“imagined” (Anderson 1983) or not – define themselves and their actions through the evocation, contest or appropriation of a specific “history”.

People’s historical conceptions are frequently “rehearsed” through the evocation and performance of “traditions”. Their content largely relies on discursive conventions concerning the meaning of the past but also the way in which this is transmitted (see Becker 1998: 1). The relationship between history and tradition is multi-faceted and in Western contexts often connotes the encounter, different each time, between “objective” academic knowledge on the one hand, and social experience and collective memory, on the other. Thus tradition may appropriate “history” by claiming continuity, authenticity and time depth (see Handler and Linnekin 1984); it may “rediscover” a (previously indifferent) history or revive it in a *mise en scène* of “acts of memory” (Mieke et al. 1998) when its aim is to support current conditions; it may alter, modify, falsify or consciously invent it, as occurs with the creation of nationalist myths which Hobsbawm and Ranger have influentially criticised (1983); finally, it can claim ruptures from it (Collard 1989, Toren 1988, cf. Foucault 1977), when present and future seem “not to need history”, or part of it, and people resist official versions of the past as they chase radical changes in social practices.

The concept of tradition is a very broad one. It does not refer only to practices and customs, but also to myths, legends and remembered stories, to landscapes, to images and of course to preserved, collected and, especially cared for, artefacts. Acknowledging the importance of all the above means to inquire into what ways people understand and explain the present through the past. How are these traditions employed and “experienced” in the present? What kind of “effective histories” (Foucault 1984: 88-90) are constructed around them for people’s own economic, political, ideological or other reasons? Is the “debatability” of the represented past (see Appadurai 1981) in accordance with historical or, more precisely, with official and academic rules and positions or does it come to any antithesis to them (see for example Collard 1989, Chapman et al. 1989, Bloch 1998a)?

Representations of the past also form the basis of an anthropological analysis in which collective memory, history and social action are seen as inextricably bound (see Cohen 1985, Geertz 1973, Papataxiarchis 1993: 53-55, Bloch 1998b, Fentress and Wickham 1992, Benveniste 1999, Climo and Cattell 2002). Memory, – primarily an individual’s activity studied until recently mostly by psychologists, – is thoroughly intertwined with collective views of the past (Bloch 1998c: 68), what Halbwachs in 1925 had already termed “social memory”. In literate societies and especially in those of the Western world, the “chronicle” of social memory has evolved – at least since Medieval times – around its close engagement with historical consciousness (Benveniste 1999). Although Halbwachs did not go so far as to propose history as an official form of collective memory (ibid: 20-21), his work paved the path for the study of the interrelation occurring between the various distinctions of memory made by himself: *autobiographical*, *historical* and *collective* (see Cattell and Climo 2002: 4). By combining social and historical time, as well as formal and informal conceptualisations of the past, “official history” is brought into the domain of social cognition and everyday practices.

Among the various ways people construct their bonds with the past, objects play a special role. The recognition, in recent years, of their impact on social relations and culture in general has led to the development of different approaches to material culture through various theoretical perspectives (see Tilley 2001), and also to the view that things, like persons, have a “social life” (Appadurai 1986). The material world is not static. It moves in and out of specific social domains following a “politics of value [which] is in many contexts a politics of knowledge” (ibid.: 6).<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the various phases and meanings of things, both past and present, are now studied as part of their “cultural biographies” (Kopytoff 1986, Hoskins 1998, Mavrayianni 1999, Gosden and Marshall 1999). In them, objects are the focus of various experiences and narratives related to their production, consumption and exchange.

---

<sup>1</sup> Appadurai (1986) deals mainly with the social life of commodities and the (political) links between their value and their (socially relevant) exchangeability. His approach, however, has influenced analyses of material culture at any phase and adventure of their life, not only “their commodity situation” (ibid.: 13).

This thesis has been conceived precisely within this broad theoretical and methodological horizon of material culture studies. It has drawn upon the special ability of objects not simply to reflect social realities – as the dominant Western tradition would have them do – but also to contribute to the generation of human action and agency (see Miller and Tilley 1996, Gell 1998, Tilley 2001, 2004, Buchli 2002). Moreover, the theoretical perspective of objectification (Miller 1987, Bourdieu 1977), i.e., the process by which people assign meaning to things and things, in turn, assign meaning to social identities within a specific context, has been of particular relevance in the study of objects. As Tilley remarks:

The meanings that people give to things...are part and parcel of the same process by means of which they give meaning to their lives. Our cultural identity is simultaneously embodied in persons and objectified in our things. (2001: 260)

Yet objectification is not simply a conceptual move, nor only a form of social practice, but also a way of participating in various actions, thus calling for ethnographic analysis (see Keane 2003: 223). In the diverse acts of objectification, material culture provides the specific link between people's thoughts and actions by means of its metaphorical power and effects. In his book *Metaphor and Material Culture*, Tilley has shown (1999) how metaphors objectified in material forms have the ability to mediate social ties by linking different domains of social life. "Solid metaphors" (ibid.) also perform work and communicate meanings which are not expressed in verbal discourse, while they also enable an endless recombination of polysemic meanings attributed to things according to context, place and time, articulating and remodelling apparent contradictions.

As for my research, it could be simply argued that artefacts are really useful to think with. Exploring the metaphorical power and meaning of things produced thousands of years ago and "used" symbolically in the present allows us a better understanding of "...ourselves or others, what makes up our identity and culture, past or future" (Tilley 2002: 25).

## **I. DEALING WITH “HERITAGE”**

*Museums, those symbols of elitism and staid immobility, are proliferating at a remarkable rate... Local/global contact zones, sites of identity-making and transculturation, of containment and excess, these institutions epitomise the ambiguous future of “cultural” difference.*

Clifford 1997: 219

Every use of the past implies an interpretation of it. This statement is even more pertinent to what is considered as *cultural heritage*, that is, something we feel is “rightfully ours” and, in one way or another, we appropriate. *Archaeological* heritage raises additional questions (and controversies) about its significance and use since its “producers”, dead a long time ago, have left relatively limited information and explanations about the meaning of their artefacts.

According to David Lowenthal, “heritage alters history” (1998: 148). Like historical texts, heritage sites always re-write and re-shape the past as they investigate, present, describe and interpret it; heritage, however, does so also by virtue of its influential social role. Attempting to render the past material remains “legible”, interesting and useful to the public, heritage specialists, have to “update” or “upgrade” the presented past (ibid: chapter 7).

In this process, museums and monuments have a special position, as most of them are dedicated to the representation of past cultures by displaying objects and other material evidence. Meanings produced in museum exhibitions about other people, times and places are often examined through semiotic readings (see Hall 1997b: 30-36) and/or discursive explorations drawn from Foucault’s analyses of power-truth-knowledge strategies (1972). During the 1990s, some of the most interesting heritage studies have exploited social theory and the methods of the social sciences, especially the discussion on “writing culture” advanced by Clifford and Marcus (1986), Geertz (1988) and others, to provide an understanding of what a museum is

and how people act and define themselves in relation to it (Karp et al. 1991, 1992, Macdonald, and Fyfe 1996) and broader issues such as the local-global relationship, as well as the meaning of public culture. Thus, as Clifford has argued in his *Routes*, a museum is a “contact zone” (Clifford 1997: 219). In it, many aspects of modernity are not only represented but also created and experienced.

More than other objects, monuments – i.e., material structures referring to the past which people decide to maintain for symbolic purposes – have been *analogically* associated with memory. These constitute the most durable “solid metaphors” for social memory and identity. As such they can be “made and unmade” (Nelson and Olin 2003, cf. Küchler 1987, 1999) following the processes of material construction and destruction of its loci. Especially within the institutionalised societies of the West and the prevailing Aristotelian tradition of memory as recollection<sup>2</sup> and the linear conception of time, destruction of heritage monuments is often considered as tantamount to oblivion and identity loss.

Paradoxically, the increasing interest people demonstrate in their own or other people’s cultural heritage comes in a period that strong voices regarding the fading role of history and tradition as binding forces are frequently heard. In an apparently contradictory combination, heritage, cultural identity and the sense of belonging to a place have never before acquired such an intertwined symbolic, political and aesthetic importance running parallel to globalisation (Friedman 1992) and the assumed end of cultural differences. Yet it is precisely this fear of loss of memory and special sense of past from which a group derives its identity – i.e., a loss associated with globalisation and de-territorialisation – that the “heritage crusade” (Lowenthal 1998) in the last decades manifests. And, perhaps, this same fear is also reflected in the increasing scientific interest currently shown in memory and heritage issues.

Therefore, the preservation, protection and interpretation of cultural remains are seen as a way of maintaining and experiencing things, identities, memories and senses.

---

<sup>2</sup> According to the ancient philosopher, “memory is like the imprint or drawing in us of things felt”, cf. Forty 1999: 2.

Moreover, the tourism industry promotes cultural difference as a main incentive to travel, using heritage as the unquestionable and tangible confirmation of the special character of places. The number of museums, historical sites and archives is continuously growing worldwide and the concern for the “museumification” of increasingly more objects, images, texts and all sorts of documentary evidence characterises our “archival world” (Derrida 1996 cited in Rowlands 2002: 106). Pierre Nora in his *Lieux de Memoire* argues that our world is full of such “mnemonic sites”, archives, museums, etc., precisely because memory does not exist any more so we need to construct, save and preserve it by any possible means (1998). On the other hand, heritage, seen as cultural property with an inalienable character (see Rowlands 2002), also enhances people’s right to difference, sometimes leading to “cultural fundamentalism” (Stolcke 1995) and in some cases to the consciously violent destruction of past remains (Layton et al. 2001). Thus the past appears increasingly significant and indifferent at the same time; the assumed flattening of cultural differences through the “end of history” is accompanied, in tandem, by its symbolically (con)solidated presence.

The “afterlives” of heritage sites, ancient monuments and historical landscapes, all pieces of past material culture in the present, have now become the focus of social research (Herzfeld 1991, Bender 1992, 1998, Yalouri 2001, Odermatt 1996, Buck Sutton 1997, see also Tilley 1993, 1994, 2004, 2006) and are examined through their position in diverse discourses, subjectivities and attitudes to the past, what David Sutton in his ethnography about the Greek island of Kalymnos has called “cultural constructions of ‘historicity’” (1998: 2).<sup>3</sup>

As Pomian has argued, objects on display are “semiophores”, i.e., “objects which do not have or no longer have a general practical use but ‘are being endowed with meaning and represent the invisible’” (1990, cited in Buchli 2002: 6). The ancient monuments of modern Greece are such a case in point. They are *semiophores* which for long have represented the invisible meanings that a whole nation has been endowed with.

---

<sup>3</sup> The title of the thesis was formulated in the light of Sutton’s use of the term by which the past (and its different categories, e.g., “history”, “tradition”, “custom” and “heritage”) is diversely conceived by people and operates in social contexts.

## **II. ANCIENT GREECE: THE WEIGHT OF THE PAST**

The existence of Greece as a state was symbolically founded on the glorious political, artistic and broadly intellectual achievements of the ancient inhabitants of the area. Actually, the country was created, established and rhetorically perpetuated through a successful absorption of a nineteenth-century Eurocentric ideology which had also long seen the ancient Greeks as its intellectual ancestors. Hence, in the context of regenerated Hellenism, ancient works had to be protected, “promoted” and emphatically investigated. Apparently, this Modern Greek attachment to classical antiquity served at the time all parties involved: European colonialism,<sup>4</sup> the Greek bourgeoisie, political mechanisms of the newly-born Greek nation-state, as well as the supporters of romantic ideas concerning the possible renaissance of classical values (see Politis 1993).

Having internalised the rhetoric about the ancient foundations of its culture, Greece promoted its monuments as part and parcel of its “historically justified identity”. Antiquities became the country’s symbolic capital (Hamilakis and Yalouri 1996) as long as the “struggle for admission to the European canon of history” (Herzfeld 1987: 93) and what is represented by it, i.e., the fair and rightful acceptance of Greece in Europe by powerful Western political forces, entailed the continuous demonstration of modern Greeks as rightful inheritors of the classical heritage.

The construction and affirmation of this identity encompassed the work of several “modalities of culture” (see Geertz 1973), such as museums, the educational system, commemorative ceremonies and the establishment of a series of intellectual practices which endeavoured to shape social memory symbolically and offer the necessary historical grounds to the nation-states’ ideological and political choices (cf. Anderson 1983: esp. 163-164 and 178-185). As the political scientist Tsoukalas has noted, the “national intellectuals” of Greece were

---

<sup>4</sup> For the paradoxical consequences of colonialism in a country never (militarily) colonised, see Herzfeld 2001: 16.



...devoted scientists-leaders who had already put in their first appearance by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. They were required to play a decisive role in the foundation and projection of specific values related to each discipline rather than in its organisation. Teachers, novelists, poets, priests, professors, geographers, folklorists, historians, ethnographers, linguists and literature scholars worked together in order to produce new mythical substantivisations of national identities, stimulating an insatiable romantic imagination which urged the production of new comprehensive political ideologies and mobilisations” (Tsoukalas 1999, cited in Caftanzoglou 2001: 57, my translation).

The search for continuities in Greek history became essential to all supporters of the national narrative (Danforth 1984, Just 1989). In particular, the educational system perpetuated a profoundly a-historical admiration for “the ancestors” and their legacy (Fragoudaki 1997).<sup>5</sup> Ancient Greeks provided not only the cultural roots of Modern Greece but also a glorious racial pedigree for its people who, rather reluctantly, were accepted into the European family of “civilised nations”. The struggle for the reconciliation of the imaginary Hellas of ancient times with the modern homeland became a major project within Greek reality. As the literary theorist Artemis Leontis has shown, the formation of modern Hellenism has greatly relied on the mutual engagement of *logos* and *topos*, that is, of the discursive creation of the Greek place (1995). The relationship of these two notions, which often developed at the intersection of literature and geography, can also be seen in the textual works produced in and about Greece since the time of Western European travellers in the eighteenth century (*ibid.*). Until the 1930s the ancient heritage undoubtedly remained the only important part of the nation’s history in such discursive creations while with the modernist literary movement of the so-called “generation of the 1930s”, the meaning of Greekness started to be seen as residing not only in its ancient heritage but also in its recent traditions, a combination which was expressed with modernist Western literary tropes (*ibid.*, cf. Tziovas 1989). This idealised perception of the Greek cultural essence based on diachronic local themes and values, on the one hand, and a liberal absorption of the Western European cultural modernity, on the other, has pervaded Greek intellectual production ever since.

---

<sup>5</sup> The social construction of the ancient past in the present has attracted significant attention in the context of recent (usually “deconstructive”) studies of Greek nationalism. The phenomenon has been examined in different fields (for literary criticism, see Tziovas 1989; for museum studies, see Mouliou 1996; for history of education, Fragoudaki and Dragona 1997).

When talking about the significance of recent Greek traditions, one could not ignore the striking role played in the symbolic consolidation of national identity by the impressive development nationwide of Folklore Studies, in Greek known as *laographia* (Kyriakidou-Nestoros 1978, Herzfeld 1982, Kakaboura 2006). Similarities between the material record of ancient Greek and traditional local societies have been interpreted by Greek folklorists as “survivals” of the ancient past.<sup>6</sup> Folklorists endeavoured to prove the linear connection between an apparently humble Greek present and the universally admirable classical past. According to this logic, the negative intermediate presence of lengthy Ottoman rule did not deprive the folk traditions of the Greek peasantry from ancient reminiscences. This (often very romantic) role of *laographia* in proving the ancient roots of modern Greek culture was greatly supported by teachers working in rural areas through the extensive collection of folkloric material in their areas of work. This symbolic consolidation of roots explains, at least partially, the diffusion and respectability of *laographia*, its accommodation in university departments, as well as the incorporation of local cultural idioms within the nation-state homogenising attitudes, given that divergent local cultural expressions are normally suppressed by nation-states on the name of a single, unified national culture (see Herzfeld 2003). Herzfeld has remarked (*ibid.*) that local variation in traditional rural societies, as evidenced by folklorists, strengthened rather than threatened national unity. By connecting folkloric practices to antiquity, they managed not only to ascertain continuities but also to differentiate the country from its “oriental” neighbours (*ibid.*), despite the evident similarities between Turkish and Greek cultural traditions.

Moreover, the impact of antiquity on modern Greek society was such that the extensive Byzantine period, covering the time span between Roman antiquity and the Ottoman conquest, was long thought of as not fitting into this glorious Greek past. Nevertheless, through the support, again, of national intellectuals, Byzantine culture was incorporated into an extended rhetorical construct of the ethnos named “Hellenic-Orthodox civilisation”, this time based on nationalist syncretism (see

---

<sup>6</sup> Pioneer in this field was Nikolaos Politis, an important figure in the Greek Academia, who formally founded the discipline of *laographia* in 1909.

Stewart 1994, Tsoukalas 1999). The inclusion of Christianity in the ancient legacy of Greece was presented as a weapon in maintaining Greek cultural identity in the difficult times of the “barbaric” Ottoman rule, which has been repeatedly blamed for the negative aspects of the current social realities in the country.<sup>7</sup>

Unsurprisingly, in the context of this orchestrated “triumph of the ethnos” (Just 1989), archaeology became one of the most symbolically loaded disciplines in the country’s attempt to “restore” Hellenism, itself a revealing archaeological metaphor. Already in the first decades after the establishment of the state in 1830, the archaeological record had been expanded dramatically and the number of preserved ancient monuments never stopped growing. Not accidentally, the word “mnimio” (*μνημείο*), which in Greek stands for “monument”, derives from “mnimi” (*μνήμη*), that is, memory. A monument, particularly a classical one, has essentially been the material vehicle of Greek social memory; it has actually served as its *cadre matériel* (Halbwachs 1950). In relation to this, in everyday language all material remains of the long past have been collectively called monuments, consolidating etymologically and practically the semantic connection between monuments and memory in modern Greek reality.

One such symbolic task of Greek archaeology was to stress cultural continuities from antiquity to modern times by placing all different material manifestations in the territories considered Greek in an uninterrupted cultural sequence, starting with the Bronze Age and ending in the Roman period. Demonstrating the “Greekness” of all people that inhabited the area during the above time span became a powerful “historical argument” in the context of the country’s territorial expansion and irredentist claims, given that in most of these territories claimed by Greece there were Greek, Greek-speaking or Greek-orthodox populations diversely combining and representing these cultural features (see Skopetea 1988). However, after 1922, the year that marked the definite end of such claims due to the devastating defeat of Greece in the Asia Minor War, the construction and confirmation of cultural continuities and the mark of many places as originating in antiquity was turned into an equally powerful but this time defensive rhetorical argument. Such attitude was

---

<sup>7</sup> For issues concerning “Hellenism” and “Greekness”, see Diamantouros 1998, Tsaousis 1998, Tsoukalas 1998, Kyriakidou-Nestoros 1998, Skopetea 1988, Leontis 1995.

discursively useful in the process of securing the country's territories and responding to threats Greece was receiving from "envious neighbours" in the East (Turkey) and North (the Balkan countries). The outstanding development of archaeological museums, excavations, travelling exhibitions and the financing of archaeological research in Northern Greece during the 1980s and 1990s in relation to the appropriation of Macedonian heritage by Greece's neighbouring country, referred to in Greece by a non-name ("Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia"), is another recent example of this characteristic tie between archaeology and nationalism, and the ideological engagement of the discipline in the shaping of a conspicuously territorial sense of place (Kotsakis 1998, cf. Brown 1994). Finally, the culture-historical paradigm, still present in the archaeological practice in the country (Morris 1994, Shanks 1996), has been engaged in an evolutionary construction of archaeological cultural phases by also making use of selected folkloric material (see Solomon 1998), this time in the opposite direction, i.e., from the recent past to antiquity. Such a strategy implies the persistent use of specific objects and material forms which allegedly performed the same functions for ages in the Greek (or claimed as such) territory, thus enhancing the symbolic prestige these "traditional" objects enjoy in Greek society.

In this broad historical, epistemological and ideological framework, modern Greek identity has been often described in terms of structural dilemmas between "*Hellenic*" and "*Romeic*" historical paradigms (Herzfeld 1982, 1987, 1997), which, in turn, are associated with classical antiquity and the Byzantine-Ottoman past, as well as diverse and changing perceptions of East and West in relation to their positive and negative connotations and the continuously shifting meanings of modernity. A variety of material and immaterial pairs of oppositions have been used to illustrate the above tendencies emblematically, with the Parthenon columns and the dome of St Sophia in Constantinople at the top of the list, as the travel writer that we shall meet in Crete Patrick Leigh Fermor put it in his travelogue *Roumeli* (1966). These poles defining the extremes between an imported Western ideology and an introspective cultural condition – very distant from the glorious achievements of the classical ancestors – signify what Herzfeld calls the *disemia* of Greek social identity (see 1982: 18-21, 1987). Its operation in the domain of self-knowledge and self-display, its association with East and West and the ways these oppositions have been

internalised have made “the Greek case an exemplary site for research on the politics of the past” (idem 2001: 15), within which Crete, as we shall see, has played, a distinct role.

### **III. THIS STUDY: THE CRETAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE** **IN LOCAL SOCIAL CONTEXTS**

As we go to Crete, Greece's largest and southernmost island, references to antiquity take a different form. No more do they recall the familiar classical or neoclassical features of monumental architecture we encounter in mainland Greece. The place of classical antiquities is taken by monuments and objects of a rather different style, age, form and colour, dated to the Bronze Age. Today these can be seen everywhere on the island, especially, however, in the Heraklion area, where architectural structures – called “palaces”, “mansions” or “villas” and dated to the second millennium BC – have been unearthed or are still under excavation.

Unlike the classical monuments and the Greco-Roman artworks which had never been totally forgotten (at least within Western intellectual production and imagination) and for centuries many of which were visible in the territories of the Ottoman Empire and in (what today is) Italy, the Cretan antiquities were totally unknown before the dawn of the twentieth century. Until that time, the prehistoric past of Crete had survived only as the memory of an ancient tale about the days and works of the Cretan king *Minos*, who reigned on the island at a splendid city called *Knossos*.

With the discovery by a Cretan merchant called Minos Kalokairinos, in 1878, of some ancient remains at the village of Makrytichos, a few kilometres south of Heraklion, the myth of Knossos acquired a material basis. Some years later, in 1900, when Crete got its autonomy from Ottoman rule, representatives from all the Great Powers of the time, ruling then on the island, devoted themselves to archaeological research. The British historian and lover of antiquity, Arthur Evans, conducted prolonged excavations at the spot of Kalokairinos's discoveries, bringing Knossos into the domain of a tangible reality.

The scholar soon put forward his first hypotheses about the Bronze Age culture of Crete, which, not so surprisingly perhaps, was termed “Minoan”. In the unearthed

remains that were immediately identified as a “palace”, indeed the one belonging to King Minos, Evans, as well as many other archaeologists, recognised the signs of the “first European civilisation” and Minoan Knossos came to symbolise a long-lost paradise which had existed hundreds of years before the emergence of classical civilisation in mainland Greece.

Thus, “Minoan culture”, a set of interpretations and hypotheses formulated by archaeologists and other experts, became “history”. Gradually, however, the official discourse of the archaeological discipline on the discovered finds has been mixed up with “unofficial” personal and collective narratives about the Cretan past and has permeated historical consciousness and social experience in several local contexts. The “participation” in and experience of the ancient past is a process influential in the way people, locals and visitors express their identity and their cultural choices in life. While they negotiate official archaeological knowledge, they create their own cultural products and discourses, not only about the past but also about the present and what they expect and hope in the future.

### **III.a. THE “GREAT ISLAND”**

*...Crete was the first land in Europe to receive the dawn of civilisation, which came from the East. Two thousand years before the Greek miracle, that mysterious, so-called Aegean civilisation was in full bloom on Crete – still dumb, full of life, reeling with colours, finesse and taste that surprise and provoke awe. It is in vain that we defy the traces of the past. I believe there is a force, a magic force radiating out of ancient lands, which have struggled and suffered a great deal. As if something remains after the disappearance of the peoples who have struggled, cried and loved on a patch of land. This radiation from past times was particularly intense on Crete.*

*It penetrates you the moment you set foot on Cretan soil.*

Excerpt from Pierre Sipriot's interview with the Cretan novelist and theorist

Nikos Kazantzakis

French Radio (Paris), 6th May 1955<sup>8</sup>

Kazantzakis is the most highly honoured Cretan intellectual. Born in Heraklion in 1883, for most of his life he embarked in extensive literary and philosophical searches which were crystallised in numerous novels, treatises, epic poems and travel writings. Although his frequent troubles with the ecclesiastical and political authorities of his time excluded him from prizes and formal distinctions, among his compatriots he achieved great popularity, still perceptible on the island 50 years after his death.

His words quoted above epitomise his view about the “the essence” of Crete. Even today Kazantzakis is considered as having captured the meaning of Cretan culture, or even of “the Cretan soul”, more accurately than any other author. Based on his Cretan, Greek and cosmopolitan experiences as well as on a powerful philosophical syncretism, the author put forward his opinion about the “Cretan glance”, that is an

---

<sup>8</sup> From the pages on Kazantzakis located on the website of the Historical Museum of Crete (their translation). <http://www.historical-museum.gr/kazantzakis/gr>



intuitive, locally specific and visionary way of approaching things infiltrated by the values of a genuine, simple and deeply humane culture (1965). His claimed isomorphism between place and culture went beyond any probable positivist and “scientific” definition of the Cretan culture: according to Kazantzakis, it is the land itself that almost metaphysically radiates cultural spirituality. And, in this ancient land in which so many people have struggled for social ideals, the Aegean i.e., the Minoan, civilisation signifies the “dawn of civilisation” in Europe. Minoan objects, “full of life, reeling with colours, finesse and taste”, embody the very special and *enduring* cultural meanings that Kazantzakis – and many others after him – have ascribed to this “patch of land” in the middle of the Eastern Mediterranean.

Crete is often referred to as “a continent in miniature”. The “Great Island”, as is habitually called in Greek due to both its great expanse and historical importance, invokes among Greeks a range of different imaginings, stressing patriotism, hospitality, cultural and natural variety, holiday landscapes, mass-tourism, important antiquities among which Knossos remains the most famous, typical agricultural products, and special, “still living” traditions related mainly to folk music, oral poetry and dance. Among these imaginings, some have strong masculine connotations; the performative expression of pride, the possession of guns and a rhetorically justified neglect of state laws are also associated with Crete, mainly with two of the island’s mountain regions, Milopotamos on Mt Ida and Sfakia further west in the region of Chania.

Since its independence from Ottoman rule in 1899 and its official annexation to the Greek state, Crete has persistently declared its cultural distinctiveness, which by no means has ever contradicted the patriotism that Cretans showed in serving the Greek national ideals in the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century. Indeed symbolic references to the Cretan role in Greek history are considerably present in local narratives. They are frequently meshed with stereotypical presentations of the notions of Cretan *levendia*, “the palikare’s [brave young man] attitude of gallantry” (Hopkins 1979: 199), the notion of honour in personal relationships, and the resistance against rulers of any kind. Such attitudes are highlighted in a long series of stories about the Cretan opposition to the Venetian and Ottoman rules, in narrations of the “Arkadi Holocaust” (i.e., the massacre that followed one of the numerous

rebellions against Turks), as well as in numerous presentations of the ferocious Battle of Crete, which was waged against Nazi troops in 1941. Moreover, stories about the refugees who came to the island from Turkey in the 1920s and brought to the island a “thousand-year-old culture” from the ancient lands of Ionia (Asia Minor) are continuously heard, at least in the Heraklion area, despite the contempt with which refugees were originally received. Finally, great emphasis is given to the fact that one of the most venerated Renaissance painters, El Greco, was born, raised and worked for a while in Crete before he moved to Italy and then to Spain. It is likely, many Cretans argue, Theotokopoulos (the painter’s name) carried the values of his land and culture into the heart of the admirable Western artistic tradition.

An account of diverse approaches to Cretan cultural heritage within conflicting views of ownership of the past is given by Michael Herzfeld in his book *A Place in History* (1991). In the mid-1980s, in the context of the then socialist government’s effort to preserve the architectural heritage of the Old Town of Rethymno, history was variously interpreted in order to justify opposed choices, beliefs, interests and lifestyles often leading to contested views and conflicting perceptions of the Venetian and Ottoman pasts of Crete. Those who wanted to preserve the Old Town buildings considered them Venetian (i.e., a positive approach to Western modernity), while those who wanted to demolish (or to make considerable alterations to) their houses viewed them as remains of a Turkish (therefore negative and Oriental) past. The rhetoric of the state bureaucracy was negotiated according to people’s interconnected economic, social and family positions, interests and expectations, all raising issues of practical and symbolic ownership of a significant material culture.

The account on Rethymno interests this study in many regards. It presents a detailed analysis of the ways the past of a place can be seen as property, while in the overall debate the defence of local identity and local family values were also deeply involved. The Rethymniote dispute over the conservation of the old houses also describes the dynamics of the difficult relationship between the state authorities and the local people when the former decide to preserve cultural heritage and the latter their domestic spaces and lives, all acting in the context of the cultural politics of Greek nationalism. From this point of view, the confrontation of the local and the official discourses has several things in common with other cases everywhere in

Greece, including the village of modern Knossos, where people are affected by the all but straightforward application of the archaeological laws.

What is also interesting to note here is that, although the Historic Conservation Office of Rethymno was not staffed by archaeologists, locals called it “The Archaeology”, for some a word synonymous with “cancer” or “gangrene” (Herzfeld 1991: 34). This name inevitably leads to some tentative assumptions about the practice of archaeology on the island. In a place with more than two thousand Minoan, Greco-Roman and Medieval sites identified (Rackham and Moody 1996: 6), and a strong emphasis given to ancient remains for symbolic and commercial purposes, the people concerned with the preservation of material culture of any historical period are recognised altogether as archaeologists. Therefore, the interpretation and the preservation of public heritage is by necessity and habit linked to the Archaeological Service, and, undoubtedly, this association bears the imprint of a power exercise.

Finally, Crete draws a great amount of its pride on its folkloric wealth. Since Ottoman times, local traditions were recorded by travellers, intellectuals and, in the twentieth century, by passionate teachers and amateur folklorists, as in the rest of Greece. Crete is no exception in strongly evoking antiquity in the interpretation of its customs and related material forms. Yet what is striking in the Cretan case is, perhaps more here than in other Greek places, the coexistence in such folkloric writings of a very strong localism together with the pervasiveness of the Greek nationalist narrative. Michael Herzfeld has explained this apparent paradox as related to three factors:

(1) the confusion of religious and ethnic modes of identity, especially with respect to the “Turks”<sup>9</sup>; (2) a strong model of social segmentation –allied, on Crete, with clear and locally potent emphasis on patrilinear kinship; and (3) a belief, successfully fostered by successive central governments and arguably based on the realities of international politics, that Greece was extremely vulnerable to foreign attack. (2003: 293)

---

<sup>9</sup> This is a reference to the generalised Greek conception of the Turk as a religiously and ethnically *Other* who is also considered as a “hereditary enemy” (ibid: 295).

Herzfeld also shows how the embarrassing, i.e., the violent or illegal, practices of the mountain communities of Crete – many of which are organised around patrilinear kinship ties – were justified in such writings and also incorporated in the nationalist discourse of the country's cultural unity. Moreover, an important parameter that is revealed in relation to the overall folklore studies effort is the distance from the peasantry's values and cultural codes maintained by the Greek elite (*ibid.*:). This class, mainly through education, had adopted aspects of an occidental cultural identity and had profound interest in maintaining existing inequalities (*ibid.*: 294).

The stance of the Greek elite towards the Greek peasantry is a basic issue which particularly concerns my study because the role of the Greek elite, as described by Herzfeld, in the period covered by his account on folklorists' texts, has profoundly changed in recent years. From an attitude of veiled contempt towards the forms encountered in rural Greece, the Greek political and intellectual elite now seems not only to accept but also to support such "local cultural forms", indeed without necessary references to assumed ancient roots. Such an attitude is not irrelevant to general shifts occurring in Greek society in the last twenty years. After long and successful attempts to absorb Greek localities into its unifying logic of nationalist homogenisation, the Greek state now looks for possible ways to enhance their special cultural significance. Tourism, the politics of the European Union towards cultural heritage, an increasing appreciation for multiculturalism, a national and international quest for the special and the unique in all cultural expressions, as well as the global phenomenon of re-emergence of localities (cf. Appadurai 1995 cf. 1988) are some of the reasons that Crete is now forming its own discourse on the meaning of its heritage, both ancient and recent; not only in relation to Greek nationalism and Western neo-colonialism, as it has done for years, but also as a specifically local reformulation of these long established conceptions of tradition and modernity.

### **III.b. SOME MINOAN “PECULIARITIES”**

Undoubtedly the Bronze Age past, identified on the island with the Minoan culture, is much more “effective” than any other historical period. Since the time of Sir Arthur Evans, the Minoan remains have attracted significant numbers of archaeologists, both Greek and foreign, and a considerable number of Minoan sites have been unearthed in the one hundred years of life of Minoan archaeology. The scientific interest in this particular period has been such that other periods of Cretan archaeology dated before or after the end of Minoan culture have been largely neglected by archaeologists (see Alcock 2002), a fact strengthened by the scarcity of monuments resembling the familiar classical style on Crete.

But the importance of the Minoan antiquities is neither confined to the plethora of scientific treatises and excavations conducted by specialists nor to the rooms of the numerous archaeological sites and museums of the island, the repositories of prestigious archaeological finds. On the contrary, the Minoan past transcends the sites’ fences and the museums’ walls and functions as an inexhaustible resource of ideas, of images and cultural elements which are used in the present for various purposes.

In fact, Minoan artefacts are in continuous motion. They “travel” physically, in exhibitions; as ideas and images in contemporary artistic production, in guides, in novels, in poems and in the *mantinades* – the improvised verses very popular in Crete, composed by Cretans on every occasion – also in postcards, posters and brochures, in souvenirs and replicas, in commercial products and advertisements, in TV programmes, in newspapers and cartoons and also in visitors’ photographs and memories of Crete.

Importantly, Minoan antiquity is also “present” in local people’s everyday discussions and thoughts. Views about the Minoan past, which are not always in accordance with the official archaeological positions or may be remarkably attached to now out-of-date archaeological theories, are constantly mingled with narratives of

belonging to Crete. The antiquities are focal objects in the expression, presentation and strengthening of local identity. Written histories by people who have studied *the Minoans* from various perspectives occupy a great deal of the local publishing activity; several narratives stress the continuity of local traditions at the heart of the Cretan “expressive” culture, making the Minoan monuments, especially Knossos, symbolic and material expression of a shared past. “Belonging to a particular locality”, writes Nadia Lovell, “evokes the notion of loyalty to a place, a loyalty that may be expressed through oral or written histories, narratives of origin as belonging, the focality of certain objects, myths, religious and ritual performances, or the setting up of shrines such as museums and exhibitions” (1998: 1) and the Minoan antiquities seem to be intertwined in all these expressions of loyalty to the island.

Thus, although the ancient past is not so well known, it is extremely present in discursive terms. The indifference shown by Cretans for museum visiting co-exists with the passionate way they speak about “the history of Crete”, as well as with their consistent use of specific archaeological information when this is seen as necessary. In moments of sincere confession, most people would blame their ignorance of a history which is largely appreciated by the local “representatives” of European modernity: the foreign archaeological schools, the international collectors who fiercely seek Minoan objects and undoubtedly by the large numbers of tourists visiting the monuments, since most of them come from Western countries. Yet at other moments, the same people set aside this ignorance. Then, they appropriate the most positive aspects of the Minoan past and, despite their incomplete knowledge, integrate it into a variety of contexts. The association of social memory and Minoan history becomes then a matter of moral values and the perceptions of the Minoan past are infused into the present.

Minoan archaeological heritage is a special cultural resource not only for those born or living on the island (i.e., those who may be non-Cretan in terms of origin) but also for those having a more elusive, ambivalent and indeterminate relationship to it, such as the vast public of tourists. Their presence on the island and their visit to the Minoan sites is obviously affected by academic knowledge and its representations. Mixed with broader concerns and global issues, these representations lead to the production of a wide-ranging tourist discourse that encompasses different

perspectives, imaginings, cultural and political differences and personal quests. Ideas on Minoan Crete also permeate the educational system. *The Minoans* occupy a great deal of the curriculum, especially in primary education, which undoubtedly affects and is affected by issues of national and regional identity. In other words, the “afterlife” of Minoan material culture can be traced in all practices related to cultural heritage, i.e., “viewing, travelling, experiencing and learning” (Appadurai and Breckenridge 1999: 406).

So Crete offers an interesting place in which the local archaeological heritage acquires multiple meanings. These, I felt, could be fruitfully investigated outside museums and this study is a first attempt at such an investigation.

Among the numerous Minoan sites, Knossos remains the most famous. It is visually and materially reproduced more than any other and its meanings are performed, experienced or even embodied over and over again. Being the most commonly researched of the Minoan sites, the most complex amongst the architectural structures on the island described as “palaces”,<sup>10</sup> the largest and most often visited of the Cretan archaeological attractions and the only one having undergone reconstruction work, Knossos has become an institutionalised “symbolic document” (Bohlin 1998: 180) for the whole of Minoan civilisation.

Moreover, in spite of the well-established Western intellectual distinction between myth and history (Samuel and Thompson 1990), the birth, course and reception of Knossos bear the multifaceted imprint of the ancient Cretan myths. These myths never ceased to exist either in the local or in the national and Western imagination. Thus the ways people (including archaeologists) have approached the prehistoric past of Crete have been unavoidably influenced by Homeric epics, ancient Greek mythology and its various representations occurring in classical and Renaissance eras.

In effect, Knossos materialises something more than a Cretan version of the national past. It objectifies local relations, values and realities that, although interwoven with

---

<sup>10</sup> Given the problematic notions surrounding the term “palace”, all uses of this term that appear in this thesis should be understood as enclosed in quotation marks.

the national narrative of the Greek state, are not always in full accordance with it. Therefore in the social space of Knossos, one can explore the articulation between the national and the local. In addition, Minoan antiquity signifies the island's response to a fluid and unstable global system that "flattens" local identities and cultural expressions, therefore the study of the relationship of the Cretan with the global can also reveal some interesting aspects of the role the Minoan monuments play in the Cretan society.

Finally, since its very first years of discovery, Knossos, more than other sites, has been associated with European values and notions. Even though the concept of Europe has been far from stable, depending each time on whom to include and whom to exclude (see Ahrweiler and Aymard 2000, af Malmborg and Stråth 2002), as well as on diverse perceptions of modernity (Hall et al. 1992), tendencies to link Minoan culture or some of its aspects to Europe are indicative of more general discourses on identity and geography, as well as on religious and political alliances between Crete, Greece and the West which, in practice, can cause ambiguity, appropriations, and sometimes, passionate conflicts.



## **IV. METHODOLOGY**

### **-Aspects of the fieldwork**

As is the case with all material culture which functions as an emblem of social identity and collective historical consciousness and not least as a source of financial income, archaeological interpretations of Minoan objects and monuments are used and negotiated by people in many different ways. The “contact zone” of Knossos in Clifford’s sense (1997: 219) is a very large one and academic knowledge about it seems to regard so many social contexts that a selection of some of them quickly appeared as necessary.

The thesis primarily examines four of them: the tourist experience of Knossos (chapter 3), the making of cultural topographies of Crete through the use of archaeological knowledge (chapter 4), the contestation of the Knossian landscape as object of conflicting perceptions and “readings” (chapter 5) and, finally, the role of the Minoan past in the village of Archanes (chapter 6). The last context emerged in the thesis as an exceptionally interesting combination of ancient and traditional heritage, the negotiation of which was still in the making during my fieldwork.

Having no special ties with Crete and reflecting on the distance that had always separated me, literally and metaphorically, from the place, I arrived on the island bearing in mind the stereotypes about both Minoan and modern Crete and the Cretan people’s legendary passion for their land. If “Crete is a world apart”, as many Greeks keep repeating, then, I felt, I could investigate the reasons for this perceived distinctiveness in relation to the equally distinctive local archaeological heritage.

I spent the first months simply identifying signs of the Minoan past in the everyday. It was easy to encounter them. Walking in the streets of Heraklion, travelling around Crete, reading most of the local newspapers daily and listening to the local radio provided me with largely instructive material that paved the way for the interviews that followed a couple of months later. *Radio Crete* was a particularly good introduction into the everyday life of the island to identify local attitudes and values.

Its morning programme, broadcast island-wide, was a forum for exhibiting and exchanging views about regional and broader topics since it was open to its listeners, accepting their phone calls daily and often accommodating divergent opinions about local issues. Moreover, Cretan newspapers (*“Nea Kriti”*, *“Messogios”* and *“Patris”*) and magazines (*“Stigmes”* and *“Kriti”*) offered a valuable collection of relevant information, exemplifying commercial and aesthetic aspects of “Cretanness”. In them, there were constant references to Knossos and other “loci” of Cretan history and social memory which presented various interrelated forms.

My very frequent visits to the local library of Heraklion, “the Vikelaia”, were equally important. The library, itself a place of cultural activities, houses all newspapers and periodicals printed on or related to Crete since the late nineteenth century. My searches in this section of the library concerned two different periods: a) from 1900 to 1935, i.e., the years covering Sir Arthur Evans’s presence at Knossos and b) from 1974 (i.e., when the democratic regime was established in the country) to the present day. An acquaintance with the first decades of the twentieth century unravelled some interesting information regarding the first encounters of Cretan society and the intellectual elite with the famous British researcher and the discovery of the “mythical” site of Knossos. Nonetheless, it was the newspapers of the last 30 years and especially of the period between 1990 and 2002 that provided me with a sound knowledge of Cretan issues open to possible anthropological re-readings. Browsing through those pages and reading articles of all kinds made me feel closer to the society that I joined for nearly twenty months: from January 2001 to September 2002.

Soon I became familiar with controversies, disputes and conflicting views regarding aspects of Cretan society and in particular the Heraklion area. Moreover, I was informed about changes that had occurred in recent years in matters related not only to the Cretan monuments but also to tourism, economic activities, the perceived traditions, the landscapes of Cretanness and the meaning of local identity as related to specific cultural practices. The archival research gave me an idea of the different interpretations and imaginings of the past while I was given the opportunity to reconstruct the historical background of current uses of Knossos and other heritage

sites. That scrutiny contributed significantly to the setting of the scene for this research as well as of its etiological background.

Initially, my training as an archaeologist was of great help in order to understand and evaluate the official archaeological narratives, as well as to note the distance that often separates them from many popular conceptualisations of ancient Crete. Nevertheless, most of the time, I felt reluctant to mention my professional background and preferred to introduce my work as a social research. This, I thought, was, at least, closer to its aim and character. The association of archaeologists with specific behaviours and the fear that people's knowledge could be seen as tested by my questions would cause suspicion and distrust. Furthermore, I often thought that the curiosity raised around my unusual Jewish name was equally disorientating with regard to the content of the conducted fieldwork. Thus it was "translated" by my neighbours into its Greek linguistic equivalent, "Astero", and, after a while, I decided to adopt it in some cases, despite its humorous associations with bucolic Greek films of the 1920s.

The research entailed participant observation and personal involvement at a variety of places. I looked at the organisation and landscaping of public spaces, at a series of oral, written and performative contexts revealing multiple engagements with the archaeological past. I also attended a large number of cultural activities involving Minoan themes and imagery even when the subject matter was not directly related to the antiquities, for example folkloric festivals, drama shows inspired by Knossos, dance performances, historical and archaeological lectures, presentations of books, gatherings of diasporic communities in Heraklion, art exhibitions, Cretan food and wine events, festivals of various associations promoting Cretan culture, etc. I met many of my Herakliote informants during such activities and gatherings.

In relation to the exploration of the tourist experience, I spent more than forty mornings at Knossos and the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion, observing people's behaviour (see below chapter 3), attending guided tours and interviewing visitors. Moreover, for one year I attended all history lessons, at two different school classes (3<sup>rd</sup> grade) of a primary school located at the junction between Heraklion and Knossos. It transpired that the teaching of Minoan history at school had a very

powerful effect on local children who finished third grade having incorporated a great part of romantic theories about Cretan history and traditions. Although my presence there, which was concluded with very amiable relations with the children and their teachers, provided me with interesting insights on the role of the educational system in the transmission of archaeological knowledge (cf. Simandiraki 2006, Yalouri 2001), I only used a very limited part of the collected information in the thesis; by the end of that year the field of the research had been extended dramatically.

I made liberal use of all this evidence. To a large extent, I have tried to combine it with the interviews I got from my informants and not to treat it as an “autonomous” system of meanings. The interviews, many of which were tape-recorded, constituted for me the main and most constructive way of working in the field. They were conducted not only with the Greek and foreign tourists, as already mentioned, but also with archaeologists, teachers, tour guides, as well as with several other people, Cretan or not, living in Heraklion.

In relation to the conflict around the Knossian landscape, I paid many visits to the village of modern Knossos, first to the local tavernas and shops where I knew my informants and then to a number of homes, as well as to the local school, where the only collective organisation of Knossos, the Cultural Association, holds its meetings. With some of these informants I had the opportunity to conduct repeated interviews, each time more and more in depth and confidential.

All informants are referred to by fictional names with the exception of the tourist interviewees who gave me only their first names (or no name at all). Furthermore, the mayors of Heraklion and Archanes as well as a couple of renowned archaeologists with special role in the area are also mentioned by their real names. I have used many of their signed articles as relevant material therefore fictional names would have obscured the meaning of their quoted words and their “role” in my narration.

Notwithstanding, the initial embarrassment (on both sides), and the common assertion that there was very little for me to find out since “most people are

indifferent to their heritage” (*“o kosmos den endiaferete gia t’arhea”*), the people who patiently answered my questions in all the above-mentioned places provided me with valuable stories, memories and views related to my topic, a part of which appear here.

### **-Living in Archanes**

Although Knossos was the monument whose creative use in the present I wanted to explore, it was Archanes, a village located 15 kilometres south of Heraklion, where I settled and which eventually provided a large part of the thesis.

At the outset, the decision to live in Archanes seemed totally fortuitous. Renting a house at Knossos had been impossible, given the very small number of existing properties around the archaeological site. Moreover, staying in the city of Heraklion did not seem to me a welcome prospect. This would have posed very different working conditions in my attempt to develop an in-depth relationship with its people. Thus, in an evening out, after an Archaniote man treated my partner and me to some raki at a local coffee shop, he let us know that an old friend wanted to move to a bigger house with his family; perhaps he could rent his own to us if we were interested. Thus we rented a place in Archanes the following day.

It soon became obvious that Archanes in its own right presented great ethnographic interest, which could illuminate the meaning of the Minoan past in the village and also allow everyday in-depth ethnographic observations. A Minoan palace, or otherwise called “palatial building”, had been discovered in the middle of the settlement, while impressive finds had been unearthed in the previous years in the Minoan cemetery of Fourni, of which I was aware due to the extended publicity on the national media and my prehistoric archaeology courses at the university. At the same time, not irrelevant to my topic, the old houses of the village had been recently restored bringing Archanes to the focus of constant discussions and positive comments about its aesthetic “upgrading”. People from Heraklion and beyond were (and still are) talking about the change in Archanes, which is now renowned for respecting its traditions and cultural heritage like very few other places on Crete. The

repeated reference to culture, tradition, the importance of local viticulture and Minoan antiquity made it a field where the “quest for culture” and its “re-imagining” (cf. Macdonald 1997a) was a major issue.

The place imposed specific codes and rules to be respected by its residents, both Archaniotes and newcomers. Although it is not very rare for outsiders to settle here after the emergence of the village as a beautiful place very close to Heraklion, being accepted by the local population was undoubtedly a difficult task. This by no means contravened the widely famous Cretan hospitality which I enjoyed at large: invitations for lunch and dinner and, more often, for a glass of raki. Cooked food, herbs and above all grapes were offered daily to me and my partner, “the outsiders who did not possess any land”. The lack of any land in our possession justified, at first instance, all treats to local products. Yet at the same time, I was required to make a major effort to meet people’s expectations and also to cope with the exercised social control that increased along with the gifts received.

The fact that I was commuting to Knossos and Heraklion several days a week made things simple and easy until the time I felt ready to develop more personal relationships with my fellow Archaniote citizens, to deal more efficiently with social control and to reach my goals, i.e., to understand local things better. My presence in the village involved long informal conversations and extended interviews with local residents; the attendance of various cultural activities; the acquaintance with various published works concerning Archaniote history and traditions, as well as the recent changes in the village’s appearance and people’s general attitudes to material culture. “Memory, myth, fantasy and desire”, (1994: x), are important factors in the making and use of historical knowledge”, Samuel argued in his *Theatres of Memory* and all of these factors were traceable in the Archaniote debating of the past.

## **V. THE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS**

The unearthing of Knossos and the flourishing of Minoan studies are owed to a great extent to Sir Arthur Evans's romantic quest and the epistemological context of archaeological practice in the early twentieth century. These events are presented in *chapter 1*, in which the "construction" of the Minoan past and its extraordinary impact are also briefly examined. Evans's assumptions, supported through his academic works and the less "formal" ways through which he communicated and popularised the results of his research, have had a most enduring impact on both academic and popular conceptualisations of Minoan Crete, also identified in many current uses of the past.

*Chapter 2* introduces the encounters with the Minoan culture one has on the island of Crete. It looks at the representations of Knossos and the various ways meaning related to antiquity is produced: at the site of Knossos and the museum of Heraklion, during guided tours, in the iconographic discourses formed through books brochures, cards and other relevant material. In the second part, an exploration of the presence of Minoan heritage in popular culture, public activities and products gives an idea about the way meanings of this past are actualised in the everyday. Here a great deal of the archival, textual and visual material is examined in order to provide the reader with the representational framework within which this research will be analysed.

*Chapter 3* deals with Knossos as the focus of the tourist experience. Visitors – coming from all over the world – constitute the greatest number of those who develop a direct contact with the monument. They have diverse preconceptions, expectations and impressions of Crete and its culture, both past and present: economic, educational, aesthetic and ideological discourses as well as the common quest for authenticity are examined as visitors view the Minoan remains and link them to broader collective social issues.

*Chapter 4* discusses the ways archaeological knowledge about Minoan Crete is put "to use" in the making of diverse cultural topographies of the island. It explores how historical knowledge regarding the Minoan past makes everyday life practices in

Crete more meaningful. The first part focuses on the role of this knowledge in several aspects of Cretan identity, the assumed link of Minoan antiquity to recent traditions and the way the past differentiates Crete from other places and people. In the second part of the chapter, broader engagements with the Minoan culture are examined through the words of people whose action and imagination is fuelled by Minoan culture. Local, national, transnational and gender elements as well as views on specific moral values attributed to “the Minoans” cut across these “translations” (Clifford 1997) of the Minoan ruins.

The people who live in the village of modern Knossos have a very different perspective of the past, especially of the meaning of their area as historical landscape, the experience of which is examined in *chapter 5*. As their lives and choices are determined by the presence of the antiquities next to or underneath their properties, the making of the surrounding landscape is a profoundly political matter involving the ambiguous exercise of power by archaeologists and other authorities. Two opposing discourses arise concerning the meaning of traditional aesthetics, local and national values, as well as the official and the Knossian significance of the landscape around the archaeological site.

*Chapter 6* looks at the case of Archanes and the local “making” of Archaniote tradition. It explores how different kinds of significant material culture, i.e., the recently restored houses, the rural landscape surrounding the village and the local Minoan heritage, are related to each other producing local imaginings of history, identity and heritage, while historical and archaeological knowledge is used in the construction, literally and metaphorically, of Archanes as a locality in the present.

In the *conclusions* I present some thoughts on issues that unite all preceding chapters.



## *Chapter 1*

### **SIR ARTHUR EVANS (1851-1941) AND THE “CONSTRUCTION” OF MINOAN HISTORY**

#### **I. THE RECENT HISTORY OF AN ANCIENT LEGEND**

*By its splendid situation close to the Asiatic coast, its delicious climate and its exuberant fertility, Crete must have been coveted from the first by the peoples of the coastlands; besides the most ancient myths refer to Crete and especially to Knossos, I should therefore not at all wonder if I found here on the virgin soil the remnants of a civilisation in comparison to which even the Trojan War is an event of yesterday.*

Heinrich Schliemann in a letter to his friend Max Muller in Oxford, 22 May 1886  
(Cited in Wood 1985: 65)

Crete was rather forgotten by the rest of Europe after the end of the Venetian rule on the island in 1669. At the same time that Europe was discovering and appropriating Classical Greece, references to Crete were limited to some mythical places and figures mentioned in a few texts of the classical literature: *Minos*, the wise judge and king who dominated the Aegean Sea with his navy; *Knossos* and the existence of *ninety cities* in Crete; *Daedalus*, the legendary sculptor and architect who built the *Labyrinth*, i.e., a maze from which nobody could escape; *Minotaur*, the imprisoned creature, fed on seven boys and seven girls sent annually as compulsory tribute to Minos by Aegeus, the King of Athens; *Theseus*, the brave Athenian prince who killed the Minotaur; and *Ariadne*, Minos's daughter, who offered the thread to Theseus first in order to help him find the exit from the labyrinth and then to escape with him from the island. Moreover, for the ancient Greeks of classical times, Crete was the birthplace of Zeus, of fair laws and art (see Zois 1996: 405-494).

In the 1870s, a German merchant and passionate reader of Homer, Heinrich Schliemann, made impressive discoveries at Troy and Mycenae. As narrated in *The*

*Iliad*, these were the two rival cities during the Trojan War. Schliemann's finds brought prehistoric antiquities into the fore. The fascinating possibility of turning Homeric poetry into "historical truths" was then offered to a large number of ambitious and impatient scholars. The exhibitions organised in Athens (1877), London (1878) and elsewhere of the lavish treasures found by Schliemann definitively changed the importance and value of the Homeric poems and introduced the view that pre-classical societies of the Aegean were worthy of study. The "Mycenaeans" became an ancient people whose remains were sought in all places mentioned by Homer, and Knossos was one of these places.<sup>1</sup>

Amateur and professional archaeologists as well as the foreign archaeological institutes based in Athens, often under strong competition which reflected the division of Crete by the Great Powers into spheres of influence, started their explorations of the island, which was then under Turkish rule (MacEnroe 2002, Farnoux 1996, Zois 1996, Cottrell 1961). Until the end of the nineteenth century, they collected objects for foreign museums, identified remains and ruins, took photographs and made countless drawings.

The site of Knossos attracted great interest: it promised the highly sought link between the splendours of Mycenaean Greece and the rich civilisations of the eastern Mediterranean. In 1878, Minos Kalokairinos, a Herakliote merchant and lover of antiquity (see Kopaka 1990, 1995), conducted the first local excavations and unearthed part of the palace's west magazines.<sup>2</sup> Soon after, British, American,

---

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that even nowadays the Homeric poems are used as a key source for the identification of Mycenaean sites, a fact that makes the archaeological discoveries even more impressive, especially when they are associated with kingdoms, kings and their palaces. This phenomenon, introduced by Schliemann and strengthened by Evans at Knossos, has recently been named "the terror of anonymity in Mycenaean archaeology" (Darcque 2003). It refers to the anxiety of prehistoric archaeologists in Greece to identify the unearthed ruins with places mentioned by Homer, as well as the archaeological tendency to use the epics (mainly the second rhapsody of *The Iliad*) "as a tourist guide of the Late Mycenaean period" (Wathelet 1987 cited in Darcque 2003: 27).

<sup>2</sup> Kalokairinos's excavation lasted only three weeks until it was stopped by the Ottoman governor. The excavator then tried to make his finds known by offering some of the giant storage jars he had found at Knossos to major European museums. Today these jars constitute the only material evidence of his work since his collection was destroyed during the last Cretan rebellion against the Turks in 1898. The action of this passionate merchant has recently attracted the interest of Greek scholars, especially in Crete, where an exhibition was organised to honour him (Archaeological Museum of Heraklion, 2000); in addition, several articles have been written about the "forgotten antiquarian" (Kopaka 1990, 1995). His name is now included in most Greek guidebooks, while a

Italian, French and German scholars, not least Schliemann himself, sought permission from the Ottoman authorities to conduct archaeological work (Hood 1987, Cottrell 1961, Hood & Taylor 1981, Zois 1996). Archaeology was “an opportunity for a country to display its claims to superiority” (McEnroe 2002: 62). They all tried unsuccessfully to obtain the land on the Kefala hill, where Kalokairinos had (very partially) brought to light the remains of a “palace”, apparently similar to the Mycenaean examples of mainland Greece. Several problems and objections to these projects were caused by the authorities, the landowner of the hill, as well as the *literati* of the “Herakliote Educational Society” (“*Filekpedeftikos Syllogos*”). The Society members feared an exportation of the antiquities to Istanbul, then capital of the Ottoman Empire, of which Crete remained part until 1899.

Arthur Evans was the ninth scholar who attempted to uncover Knossos.

---

historical novel about Crete which soon became a best-seller, *The Century of Labyrinths* by Rhea Galanaki (2002), placed Kalokairinos’s discovery at its symbolic outset.

## **II. SETTING THE SCENE**

### **-The background of Evans's discoveries (1893-1900)**

Oxford-educated and very wealthy, Arthur (later Sir Arthur) Evans (Fig. 2) was deeply interested in history, numismatics and archaeology (mainly of prehistoric and Roman sites in Britain). He shared his interests with his father, John Evans, a businessman, famous collector and numismatist, and his father-in-law, E. A. Freeman, well known in those times for his ideas about the Aryan race and its superiority over the perceived “barbarism” of several peoples of the East.<sup>3</sup>

Evans had always sought an unconventional career (Brown 1993, Cottrell 1961, Farnoux 1996, MacGillivray 2000). Before he became Keeper of Antiquities at the Ashmolean Museum of the University of Oxford, he had travelled widely in the Balkans, where he supported Slavic secessionist movements against the Turks (Brown 1993). He worked as a correspondent for British newspapers and published extensively on Balkan politics, history, archaeology and ethnology until he was imprisoned and expelled, accused of espionage.

Contrary to the academics of Oxford and other intellectual groups of his time, Evans had a strong interest in prehistoric societies and always kept a distance from the overpowering classicism of his fellow scholars (cf. Momigliano 2006). Considered a very successful keeper (see Harden 1952) at the Ashmolean, he encouraged a social-historical, profoundly evolutionary approach to antiquity rather than the traditional artistic perspective generally employed in the nineteenth century. His interest in all aspects of ancient societies aiming “to illustrate the laws of Evolution as applied to human arts” (Evans 1884: 8) determined his keepership at the museum, as well as his excavation and exploration work on Crete.

---

<sup>3</sup> For biographical information on the scholar's life and activities, see J. Evans 1943 (Evans's half-sister) and Horwitz 1981; for his travels before Knossos, Brown 1993; for a critical analysis of his work, see Farnoux 1996, Zois 1996, MacGillivray 2000, and Hamilakis 2002a, 2002b.

### - Evans's presence at Knossos

Nineteenth-century scholarship was dominated by the appreciation of writing as the outstanding mark of all “advanced” civilisations. This colonialist view, expressed in both anthropology and archaeology, played a special role in the progress of archaeological discoveries on Crete as long as it was hypothesised that the “very developed” Mycenaean society (remains of which were also sought on the island) must have had a kind of script. Evans shared this assumption, especially after a visit to the Athens flea market in 1893, where he saw a seal with hieroglyphic symbols derived from Crete (Farnoux 1996: 38-39). The search for a prehistoric script, the power of ancient myths about the primacy and richness of Crete in very early times and the influence that Evans had previously received from other (though rarely acknowledged) scholars concerning the importance of Crete in the pre-classical period (see Zois 1996) led him to the island in 1894.

Until 1899, he visited several areas of Crete studying visible ancient remains and collecting objects. Helped by the members of the Herakliote Educational Society and especially by its president, Joseph Hazzidakis, Evans finally managed to buy all the land on the hill of Kefala from a Turkish Bey. The excavations started essentially at Evans's own expense in 1900 (23 March), the first year of Cretan autonomy, (Fig. 3 and 4). In this attempt, he was aided by an architect (initially Theodore Fyfe, later Christian Doll, and finally Piet de Jong), an artist and fresco restorer (Gilliéron *père* and later Gilliéron *fil*s), an experienced archaeologist and pottery specialist, Duncan Mackenzie,<sup>4</sup> a foreman and a large number of Cretan workers, men and women, both Christian and Muslim Cretans.

Very soon the “palace of Minos” was unearthed. During the first two years, Evans tried to match his finds at Knossos with the Homeric descriptions and the information drawn from Schliemann's excavations at Mycenae. Gradually, Evans realised that the Knossian finds were earlier and different in style. This constituted the basis of the conception of Bronze Age Crete as an entirely independent

---

<sup>4</sup> Duncan Mackenzie was Evans's assistant for many decades. His skills and contribution to the first steps of Minoan and generally Aegean archaeology have only recently been acknowledged (see Momigliano 1999).

civilisation, earlier, more important and dominant in the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean. In other words, Schliemann's *Mycenaeans* became mere imitators of Evans's *Minoans*.

Excavation work continued until 1930 and revealed a smaller, second palace, other buildings, "temple tombs", etc. The discovery of Knossos (which was completed during the first six excavating seasons until 1905) and a whole civilisation around it, i.e., the Minoan, became Evans's major endeavour for the rest of his life. He dedicated himself to the research of ancient Crete through extended publishing and further excavation during which he employed some pioneering archaeological techniques: stratigraphy, very detailed diaries, sketches and drawings, photographic documentation, etc. (Brown 1983, Cottrell 1961, Farnoux 1996: 40-43). Finally, he undertook and financed a huge programme of restorations. Buildings and wall decorations were reconstructed in order both to preserve the ruins and to make the researcher's own vision of the Minoan world more explicit.

Evans's holistic approach to the past, combined with an astonishing encyclopedic and comparative talent, culminated in his major work, *The Palace of Minos*, published between 1921 and 1936. As an "all-terrain expert" (Farnoux 1996: 36), he dealt with all possible aspects of Minoan Crete in his book. He interpreted his finds by comparing and relating them to the material culture of all known periods and civilisations of human history. Though criticised for conspicuous anachronism, he linked Bronze Age Crete to the Romans, to Renaissance Italy, to the Balkan peoples with whom he had lived for years before he went to Crete, and to the myths and folk traditions of modern Crete (Farnoux 1996: 73-76).

More than anything else, however, Evans, with his tremendous activity and passion in supporting and communicating his ideas, has largely influenced, even until today, Minoan archaeology (a branch of prehistoric archaeology founded by himself), as well as people's ideas about the island's past.

### **III. INTERPRETING BRONZE AGE CRETE**

#### **- Myth and archaeological reality: The power of “Minoan” terminology and palace models**

*Out in the wine-dark sea there is a rich and lovely island called Crete, washed by the waves on every side, densely populated with ninety cities...one of the ninety cities is a great town called Knossos, and there for nine years King Minos ruled and enjoyed the friendship of almighty Zeus.*

Homer, *The Odyssey*

Following Kalokairinos and Schliemann, and projecting his Victorian-Edwardian background (see Mc Neal 1974, MacEnroe 1994), Evans saw in the architectural complex of Knossos a palace that functioned as the base of a powerful king and his family. Through this interpretation, the myths surrounding Knossos and King Minos referred to in the ancient mythological traditions were given documentary value and the archaeological finds were seen as undoubted proof of the historicity of the ancient legends. As an article which appeared in *The Times* (5.11.1900) claimed in relation to the discovery of Knossos, “Archaeology is the Ariadne which has at last furnished the clue to what lies at the root of Hellenic Civilisation” (Brown 1983: 35).

Evans added a new period, the Bronze Age, and a new civilisation to the written accounts of Cretan history. He called them *Minoan* after the legendary king, whose palace he was anxious to unearth in glory at Knossos. The inhabitants of Bronze Age Crete whose rulers lived at Knossos were referred to by the name *The Minoans*, implying a kind of ethnicity for the Bronze Age Cretans.<sup>5</sup> This was in line with the Homeric Achaeans who after Schliemann’s discoveries at Mycenae gradually became *The Mycenaeans*. Besides, Evans divided the Cretan Bronze Age into three

---

<sup>5</sup> For issues related to the gradual use of “Minoan” terms by Evans, see Cadogan 2006.

periods called *Early*, *Middle*, and *Late Minoan*, each one having three sub-periods. In this, he followed the ancient myth according to which King Minos reigned for nine years (Evans 1906, cf. Zois 1996: viii, McNeal 1974, MacGillivray 2000, Hamilakis 2002b: 6). The whole chronological system of the Cretan Bronze Age, based on stratigraphic observations of the pottery distribution at Knossos, was fitted into this scheme. The “Minoan” terminology conformed to the hints provided by the myth in that it accurately reflected the evolutionary perception of all civilisations: Early, Middle and Late Minoan periods corresponded respectively to the establishment, pinnacle and decadence of the Bronze Age civilisation in Crete.

The absolute application of a poetic and mythological topography in the interpretation of several parts of the architectural complex of Knossos also implied the existence of Minos as a factual, historical figure. Therefore, several rooms were associated with him or his family, primarily the so-called *Throne Room* with its “almost Gothic chair” (Evans cited in Brown 1983: 40, Fig. 5) and the King’s *Megaron*, i.e., the royal residential quarter.<sup>6</sup> The basin found in the East Wing was called *Ariadne’s Bath* and the *Throne Room* was initially known as the *Council Chamber of Minos* (Brown 1983: 35), inspired by similar epic descriptions. Evans’s interpretation went so far as to suggest that the *Labyrinth* where Minos kept the Minotaur was the palace itself with its complex, “labyrinthine” structure.

By associating the unearthed ruins with the Labyrinth and the mythical kingdom of Knossos, Evans created a strong impression on people both on the island and abroad (Fig. 6). Scholars, archaeologists and celebrities soon came from Europe and America to visit “Minos and Ariadne’s palatial residence”. They sat in the *Throne Room* and admired *the baths*, a comfort enjoyed by very few people even at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The scholar’s romantic and imaginative visions of Minoan Crete as a kingdom were drawn not only upon the ancient myth but also upon other examples of “developed societies” of his time. Several critics (Bintliff 1984, McNeal 1974, Starr 1955,

---

<sup>6</sup> The term ‘Megaron’ is found in the Homeric descriptions of royal residences. It has had a strong impact upon all interpretations of Mycenaean sites since Schliemann’s excavations at Mycenae, Troy and Tiryns, all three places mentioned in *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. For the “Megara” and the “pseudo-Homeric” model in Aegean Archaeology, see Zois 1996.



Farnoux 1996, Zois 1996, MacGillivray 2000, Hamilakis 2002b) have noticed in Evans's theories Victorian elements associated with the British Empire of the nineteenth century, its powerful navy and its colonial domination worldwide. These are also evident in the evocative names of some rooms at Knossos (see Brown 1983: 34-35): for instance, the stairway at the east side of the complex which was named *The Grand Staircase*, recalling a Victorian staircase at Windsor Castle (Hitchcock 1999). In the same spirit, the upper floor of the West Wing became the *Piano Nobile* of the palace, alluding to the architectural features of aristocratic buildings in Renaissance Florence (Zois 1996).

The interpretation of Knossos as a royal dwelling triumphed among contemporary as well as subsequent scholars and, of course, among the public that has been growing dramatically ever since. This view was also in accordance with the sophisticated lifestyle implied by the elegant frescoes and the other artistic objects found at the site. Evidently, this perspective better suited the concept of grandeur, usually linked to kings and queens.

Although we know very little about the political and social organisation of Minoan society, nowadays archaeologists still use not only the name "Minoans" but also the term "palace" for the monumental multi-storied structures of Knossos and at least another three sites in Crete (Phaistos, Malia, Zakros). Until the 1970s little or no emphasis at all was given to other possible functions of the palace, the labour input in its construction and maintenance, and the social implications of its apparent organisational sophistication.

#### **- A peaceful and harmonious society**

The lack of archaeological evidence concerning fortifications in Bronze Age Crete, as well as the few references made by classical writers to the dominant navy of King Minos and his exemplary legal system, encouraged Evans to describe Minoan Knossos as a powerful society and its inhabitants as extremely peace-loving. In the context of his vision, broad-minded and generous kings who showed great respect for the natural environment of the island ruled at Knossos.

His accounts also stress *the Minoans'* love for flowers, animals, feasts, sports and colours; the vital role of a female divinity; the high social position of women; and the Cretan domination throughout the Aegean, i.e., the legendary *thalassocracy* imposed by King Minos (Starr 1955, 1984). The landscapes of Crete and the conspicuous emphasis of Minoan art on floral and marine motifs were also invaluable factors in the depiction of an advanced culture, consistently referred to as warless and protected by the "*Pax Minoica*", a term alluding to the famous Pax Romana of the Roman Empire.

It has been argued that the presentation of Minoan Crete by Evans as a long lost paradise echoes the "general political, social and emotional 'Angst' in Europe of his time" (Bintliff 1984: 35), just before the devastating, especially for Britain, First World War. Idealistic visions of egalitarianism in Minoan society persisted, supported by "Minoanists" until the early 1970s (*idem*), when the archaeological ethos of those times, influenced by Marxist approaches, showed special concern with patterns of social organisation. Only then was it argued that a complex economy, such as the Minoan, could not have been pursued without social stratification, differentiation, hierarchy, or even exploitation (*ibid*: 37).

Finally, even the persistence with which Evans interpreted all depictions of female divinities as "Mother" or "Great" Goddesses with powers of fertility and maternity is not irrelevant to the broader ideologies concerning motherhood in the late Victorian period (Morris 2006). Evans's strong tendency to syncretism made him mix diverse material from Neolithic figurines, Minoan images of female figures, and other material from "primitive" cultures in a unified whole (*ibid.*). We shall come across these views in many current perceptions of the past shared by fierce collectors of "Goddesses" (Lapatin 2002), tourists at Knossos (see below chapter 3), Cretan people, local and international feminists as well as supporters of new-age ideologies which advocate the veneration of the Mother Goddess in the present (chapter 4).

**- Other aspects: Anti-classicism and the notion of “Europeanness” in all things Minoan**

*The recent discoveries in Crete have added a new horizon to European civilisation.*

*A new standpoint has been at the same time obtained for surveying not only the Ancient Classical World of Greece and Rome, but also the modern world in which we live. This revelation of the past has thus more than an archaeological interest. It concerns all history and must affect the mental attitude of our own and future generations in many departments of knowledge.*

Evans 1909: vii. Preface to the first guidebook on Crete by Hawes and Hawes

While many of Evans’s discoveries were perceived and presented by other archaeologists and specialists as the predecessors of the “classical miracle”, the scholar himself stressed the importance of the Minoan culture and its art far away from glorified images of classical art. For him, the objective was to discover a more original cultural horizon, preferably indigenous, fresher and more innovative than the one offered by the classical paradigm. The Cretan prehistoric past could serve as the basis for all important things that took place in Europe in subsequent periods. This passion for the origins led him to present several of his discoveries as the first examples of European, or rather Western, cultural elements: “the first bath in Europe”, “the first example of hygiene”, “the first paved road”, etc. Besides, *the Minoans* loved elegant feasts and beautifully decorated objects, as did the upper class Europeans of his times.

The scholar assumed the primacy of Minoan culture in all fields of social activity. He saw Cretan power spread in a vast area in the Aegean and the Eastern Mediterranean. Having confirmed the much older origins of the Cretan objects in respect to the Mycenaean finds in mainland Greece, he proposed the theory of “Panminoism” (Sakellarakis 1998: 198). According to this theory, the Mycenaean culture was a simplified offshoot of Minoan culture, while Mycenaean elements found in late phases were attributed to “invaders” and warlike people from the mainland.

The discussion about the cultural primacy of the Minoans took place in a period when “orientalist” views were dominant amongst European intellectuals (Said 1978). Europe defined itself in opposition to a backwards, despotic and non-rational *Other* who was located in its blurred borders, i.e., in the Near East; and Archaeology could provide an appropriate field for the location of such antithetical conceptions of European modernity (Hamilakis and Momigliano 2006; see also Papadopoulos 2005). Evans had encountered and described several negative examples of despotic regimes in earlier periods of his career. His sympathy with and interest in the rights of the Balkan people that gave him the title “Smiter of Pashas” (MacGillivray 2000: 38) and his opposition to the Turkish rule, were reflected in the constant and idealistic stressing of the “European” and progressive character of his Minoans. Actually, it is this cultural conflict between European and oriental, progressive and backwards, modern and traditional that has largely permeated archaeological and popular thinking on Minoan Crete until today.

**IV. IMAGES OF KNOSSOS PRODUCED BY EVANS:**  
**“POETIC REALITIES THAT ARCHAEOLOGY REVEALS”<sup>7</sup>**

*...Minoan civilisation was created in the twentieth century by Sir Arthur Evans, who has left us with but a single Knossos: a concrete futuristic vision of a timeless legendary past constructed in a Victorian present.*

Hitchcock and Koudounaris 2002: 42

Recent studies of museum representations have demonstrated how values of modern culture are embedded in visual forms of knowledge about past societies (see Moser 1997, Molyneaux 1997, 1999, James 1997). As Molyneaux has put it, “such images end up as artefacts of our own intellectual past” (1999: 134). Nowadays, archaeological reconstructions of Knossos constitute an extremely controversial representation with immense visual power. Their examination offers an interesting revelation of Evans’s concerns, broader interests in the past, aesthetic stances, influences from exotic cultures and artistic movements of the early twentieth century and, interestingly, diverse use of existing (or even invented, see Klynne 1998) archaeological evidence.

The British scholar was the first to employ architects and specialist designers in his excavations and included their works in his publications, especially in *The Palace of Minos* (1921-1935). His assumption that Knossos was full of red, slightly conical columns as he saw them in the fragments of some frescoes and clay objects “besieged” the drawings made by his colleagues (Fig. 7). Some of them were also circulated to newspapers, since, as mentioned above, Evans was particularly interested in popularising his work through the media of his time. Colourful graphics illustrate impressive and complete views of the palace, Minoans performing various rituals and scenes of a joyful everyday life, in the context of an intense idealism and

---

<sup>7</sup> The comment belongs to Edmond Pottier in his presentation of the Throne Room a few years after its discovery (cited in Farnoux 1996: 51).

romanticisation of Bronze Age Crete (Fig. 8). People, rulers and, not least, members of the Minoan “clergy” appear to act in admirable unity and harmony.

### **- Restoration work**

*Restorations like the Throne Room are not a question of methods, but of the gratifying of a desire to reconstruct tangibly **what must otherwise only be imagined.***

Hogarth, director of the British School at Athens in a letter to Evans, 1902.

(Quoted by Cottrell 1961: 137, emphasis added)

*...To a height of over 25 feet there rise before us the Grand staircase and columnar hall of approach practically unchanged since they were traversed 3½ millennia back by kings and queens of Minos's stock...We have here all the materials for the reconstruction of a brilliant picture of that remote epoch.” The result achieved by **this legitimate process of reconstitution [i.e., of the Grand staircase] is such that it must appeal to the historic sense of the most unimaginative...***

A. Evans *The Times* (London), 31 October 1905 (cited in Farnoux 1996: 91, emphasis added)

***I am grateful to him** [i.e., to Evans]...**that he made it possible for me to descend the Grand Staircase, to sit on the marvellous throne chair the replica of which at the Hague Peace Tribunal is now almost as much a relic of the past as the original...Knossos...is...gay, healthful, sanitary, salubrious...There is something down to earth...In short, the prevailing note is one of joy.***

Henry Miller, *The Colossus of Maroussi*, 1941: 121 (emphasis added)

The fragility of the remains and the friability of the Knossian architectural materials were the main reasons Evans decided to restore some components of the complex, in order to protect and consolidate the most exposed and vulnerable parts (Fig. 9).

However, after the First World War and until 1930, he employed a much more radical attitude: he remade whole parts and added new ones<sup>8</sup> (Fig. 10). Knossos is the first and only archaeological site in Greece where reconstruction has been undertaken on such a large scale. Among the complex pattern of ruined rooms, the endless foundations at different layers, the paths and the stairways stand the rebuilt walls, the colonnades with their pillars of concrete painted red or black and copies of the restored frescoes with their vivid colours put on the remade surfaces (Fig. 11). All the above delighted some of the early visitors to Knossos such as Henry Miller, as described in his idealised account of pre-war Greece (1941, see above quote), and continue to enchant many contemporary visitors to the site as well.

Evans used Minoan iconography as documentary evidence in drawing conclusions about the form of the buildings. Thus the Knossian frescoes (as restored by the scholar) offered historical support during the “reconstitution” – as he preferred to call it – of several parts, for which there was scant or no evidence at all.

Evans himself was aware that his “attempt may well at times seem overbold, and the lover of picturesque ruins may receive a shock” (1926: 258) and felt the need to defend his decisions during a lecture he gave for the Society of Antiquaries (*ibid.*). Nevertheless, since the early twentieth century, his interventions have received quite controversial and often negative criticism. This criticism cited the accuracy of his work (a great part of which is purely imaginative), the credibility of frescoes used as sufficient and reliable information sources in filling the gaps in architectural evidence, and the use by the restorers of materials which did not exist in Bronze Age Crete, such as reinforced concrete. Ethical issues were also raised. Critics noted the irreversibility of the applied methods, the difficulty in distinguishing between original and new material and, finally, the extent of the restoration as opposed to the right of visitors to imagine “what is not there”, as Hogarth, the director of the British School at Athens, already noticed in 1902.

The reconstructions of many parts of the palace and its frescoes also seem to substantiate Evans’s preconceived ideas about Minoan religious structures and

---

<sup>8</sup> For the various phases of his restorations at Knossos, see Brown 1983.

practices. Thus, for example, the so-called “Prince with the Lilies” fresco – otherwise known by Evans as the “Priest-King” – (Fig. 12, 13), which was formed through the conjunction of fragments belonging to different figures (Sherratt 2000), acquired the power of a portrait of an actual person, supposedly combining religious and political power in the Minoan society. Finally, the aesthetic movements of the early twentieth century, especially Art Nouveau in the decorative arts and Art Deco in the architectural design, have largely influenced Evans’s work to such an extent that his Knossos is now considered a characteristically modern building in both technical and aesthetic terms (Farnoux 1996, Hitchcock and Koudounaris 2002). Indeed Farnoux has argued that Evans’s Knossos is a characteristic monument of Art Nouveau, which “belongs to the architectural legacy of the turn of the century, [like] Antonio Gaudi’s Park Guell in Barcelona or Josef Hoffmann’s Palais Stoclet in Brussels. (1996: 111):

As is the case with all restorations, Knossos speaks eloquently not only about its ancient inhabitants and users but also about those who decide about its appearance in the present. In its reconstructed form, the monument reveals aesthetic tastes but also broader social quests embedded in the practice of Minoan archaeology all through the twentieth century.



## CONCLUSIONS

In a frequently cited quote from the *Palace of Minos*, Evans describes an illusion he had one night at Knossos (vol. III: 301). As he was ill and searching for better air, he turned to a purposely built tower which was used to inspect the excavations. It is unclear whether it was due to the fever, the air or the moonlight, or all these factors combined but the man saw most of the figures depicted on the frescoes, excavated, restored and named by himself, walk down the staircase of Knossos. The “Priest-King” and the “Cup-bearer”, a figure from the reconstructed “Procession fresco”, accompanied by other elegant great ladies and youths, animated the place in front of the scholar’s puzzled eyes.

Such is the force of Evans’s description that the modern reader cannot avoid the juxtaposition of this illusion with his overall project to restore – literally and metaphorically – a whole, hitherto totally unknown, civilisation. Acting within the epistemological context of the archaeological practice of his times and facing the cultural quests and dilemmas of his social milieu, he interpreted the ancient remains of Knossos as signs of a nearly ideal and highly sophisticated society, located at the cultural and geographical borders of Europe. Dated long before the classical societies of ancient Greece in which the West had rooted its ideological and political primacy, the reconstructed Bronze Age Cretan culture united several positive elements of European progress, while, at the same time, it remained far from Europe’s negative aspects.

In closing, Evans’s conceptualisation of Minoan Crete was probably the most poetic interpretation of prehistoric finds that an archaeologist could provide us with, without ignoring the existing archaeological evidence. In the space of 35 years (from 1900 to 1935), not only did he turn a legend into an archaeological reality but also succeeded in turning this reality into a modern myth, “employed” in multiple forms and variations by subsequent archaeologists and the public until today.

## *Chapter 2*

### **“MINOAN ENCOUNTERS”:**

#### **OFFICIAL AND POPULAR REPRESENTATIONS OF KNOSSOS**

*[Representation] is the link between concepts and language which enables us to refer to either the “real” world of objects, people or events, or indeed to imaginary worlds of fictional objects, people and events.*

Hall 1997b: 17 (emphasis added)

The amazing amalgamation of the Minoan past and European modernity discerned at Evans’s Knossos presents a striking example of the factors that may influence the visual and textual representations of an archaeological monument. The way the scholar collected, classified, conserved and interpreted his “hard” data – i.e., the excavation finds and his stratigraphic observations – reveals and often visualises his views about Bronze Age Crete, and, predominantly, about the historical milieu of their production.

Today, one hundred years after Evans’s first finds and publications, life in Crete offers an enormous field of encounters with the scholar’s ideas, which until recently had remained largely unchallenged within the academic domain. Museum exhibitions, and undoubtedly, guided tours, guidebooks, postcards, brochures, Cretan commercial products and advertisements drawing on Minoan imagery, cultural activities inspired by the archaeological heritage of Crete, etc. are all “arbiters of meaning” about Minoan times, people and places. They present a diverse degree of negotiation of academic archaeological knowledge as they condense visually, textually and sometimes performatively a rich network of associations between places (actual and imaginary), commodities, past and present objects and landscapes, as well as feelings, experiences and activities.

Considering that “things touch the banks of discourse because they appear in the hollow space of representation”, as Foucault argued with his felicitous phrase (1970:

130), an investigation of the representations of Minoan Crete is necessary since this research will allow us to contextualise the subject matter of the thesis, i.e., the discursively justified social use of the Minoan past in the present. The examination here serves as an introductory backdrop against which the main chapters of the thesis – dealing with the ways these representations *operate* – ought to be read.

The inquiry on the ways the Minoan culture is represented starts at the emblematic site of Knossos. Its interpretation constitutes a tangible representational apparatus (cf. Karp and Lavine 1991, Macdonald and Fyfe 1996, Pearce 1989, Lidchi 1997, Wood and Cotton 1999) that produces authoritative knowledge about Cretan antiquity, which, in turn, is reproduced in everyday images and texts. As a construction from and towards specific social groups (cf. O’Hanlon 1993, Bender 1997, Macdonald 1998), the impact of this knowledge can be traced on both the tourist experience and the shaping of local identity.

Apart from the site, this chapter considers a large amount of material related to the monument: guidebooks, postcards, tourist brochures, the work of the tour guides and information collected during the participation in more than thirty guided tours at the site. Furthermore, it examines an extensive collection of relevant pictures taken during the fieldwork as well as from old and recent local newspapers, the web, magazines, commercial products and advertisements. Moreover, it draws on several local cultural activities which I attended and which were not addressed to an audience of tourists. By employing Minoan themes, these activities negotiate the past and performatively recast the identity of all participants: organisers, actors and spectators. Being by no means exhaustive, this chapter attempts to highlight the principles unifying the making of the Minoan heritage representations and the existing shared codes regarding the communication and “translation” (cf. Hall 1997b: 21) of meaning about ancient Crete.

# 1. THE PRESENTATION OF MINOAN ANTIQUITY

## I. OFFICIAL ATTEMPTS

### - Site interpretation at Knossos; its impact

Although at his time Evans meant his reconstructions to “appeal to the historic sense of the most unimaginative”, today to most people’s eyes, the site appears as largely underinterpreted and difficult to understand. For the unprepared tourist who is also not accompanied by a specialist, Knossos offers a literally labyrinthine structure, that is, an impressively complex and large number of ruins which “in the best case will be appreciated for their picturesqueness” (Palyvou 1997: 23). But even the charming – for many tourists – feeling of viewing picturesque ruins can quickly disappear faced with the extreme number of visitors and struggling guides, the intense heat and the site’s restricted relationship to the natural landscape, in addition to the noise coming from the busy road in front of the site, teeming with restaurants, coaches and souvenir kiosks.

The palace is not the only important monument at Knossos. However, its rather suffocating surrounding fence disconnects it from the other nearby excavated monuments, the *Little Palace*, the *Unexplored Mansion*, the tombs, etc., which clearly belong to the same whole and have also been restored by Evans in the same style (see map, Fig. 65). The construction of the fence in the 1950s protected the palace from potential risks but literally confined the visitors’ experience. The fence also visually and mentally excluded the inhabitants of the village from the monument. With the subsequent introduction of an entrance fee, an official narrative on the monument was imposed by separating it from the secular and the everyday. Nowadays, the possibility of visiting only the palace contributes, together with the separation of the different monuments from each other, to physical and conceptual isolation, which, in any case, is not in the least reversed when one arrives at the museum. The passage from the free area to the restricted, confined and monitored site connotes the transition from a more “genuine and innocent” to a commercialised,

massively exploited and distant reality, frequently pointed out by both the local inhabitants of modern Knossos and the guards of the site.

The separation of the architectural remains from all the removable finds – now at the museum of Heraklion and the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford – sets an additional problem to the physical and intellectual unity between architectural, in situ, remains and their associated material culture. Both the museum exhibition and the presentation of the site do very little to unify these elements.<sup>1</sup> The few (unexplained) reconstruction drawings of Knossos placed amongst the heavily taxonomic displays in the museum rooms<sup>2</sup> only vaguely remind the visitor of the provenance of the exhibits, while at the site, the only case of object contextualisation is the palace's magazines: some large storage jars – the *pithoi* – are left in situ implying the function of these particular areas as storerooms. Not accidentally, this is one of the two non-reconstructed areas of the palace (the other one being the “theatre area”) that attracts the attention of the visitors who stop, gaze and take or buy pictures of it.

The relationship of the monument to the public has been examined mainly in terms of conservation (Papadopoulos 1997, Fakidis 1997, Palyvou 1997). The massive numbers of visitors and the vulnerability and friability of the Minoan materials exposed to the weather conditions (dramatically changeable in Crete) have caused serious damage to the ancient remains. The ambitious programme for the protection and interpretation of Knossos, currently in place, aims at the conciliation of this tension between conservation and accessibility. Its realisation, however, has had important consequences. First, it excludes several parts of the palace, which can be seen only from the outside. Moving within the site does not allow entrance to the *Throne Room*, the *Queen's Baths*, the *King's Megaron*, the *Lustral Basins* and the *Grand Staircase*. In 1997-98, movement was further limited through a suggested route, delineated by wooden ramps, cordons and corridors (Fig. 14). The freedom of moving independently following multiple itineraries has been drastically restricted in

---

<sup>1</sup> Note that in November 2006 the Museum closed to the public in order to redisplay its Minoan collections after 45 years.

<sup>2</sup> These drawings were made by Evans's assistant Piet de Jong after they were commissioned by Spyridon Marinatos, Ephor (i.e., supervisor) of Antiquities in Crete between the two World Wars (Cadogan 2004). They are considered typical examples of an Art Deco style projected onto the reconstructed antiquities (see Fig. 7).

order to protect the palace and at the same time to help the visitors avoid getting “lost in the labyrinth” (Palyvou 1997). However, many of those who visited the monument in the past admit that the experience is now lacking the emotion of getting inside the structure and hence the past it represents. The control of movement has caused a structured and more organised gaze of a less involved spectator.

Finally, a crucial aspect of the presentation of the site is the official strategy concerning Evans’s “reconstitutions”. Since the nineteenth century, Greek heritage policy has focused largely on the beauty and the spirit of the “authentic” ruins, often leaving them to “speak for themselves”; in this respect, Knossos presents some peculiarities. The remarkable “embeddedness” of Evans’s concrete reconstructions, literally, in the original ruins, and, metaphorically, in people’s perception of the monument, now obliges the Greek state to find possible ways to save the restorations, making the official rhetoric defender of a much criticised interference. The deeply established logic of authenticity, inherent in the perception of antiquities as symbolic capital of the nation (Hamilakis and Yalouri 1996), is considerably modified in practice, with important consequences in many social contexts, as we shall see in chapters 3 and 4.

The same heritage policy scheme has been followed for the preservation of the towering pine trees surrounding the palace and the main road to the *Villa Ariadne*. As old as the reconstructions themselves, the impressive trees planted by Evans in order to offer a proper context to the palace, have recently been declared listed natural monuments (see Fig. 1)<sup>3</sup> The trees, as most interviews with visitors reveal, have a strong impact on their experience of the site and many of them perceive the small forest as a pleasant remain dating to an ancient past that suggests or confirms the assumed relationship of the Minoans with nature.

---

<sup>3</sup> Personal communication with the architect Mr Flavio Zanon, member of the Knossos conservation programme team.

## **II. INTERMEDIATE MARKERS: TOUR GUIDES AND GUIDEBOOKS**

*Ladies and gentlemen, here you see the remains of the first and most important civilisation in Europe.*

Tour guide at Knossos

Guidebooks on and tours at Knossos form a detailed visual and conceptual map of landmarks introducing or confirming the acquaintance with the island's past. Endowed with prestige and authority – since they are most often written or conducted by specialists – they constitute a powerful channel in the transmission of specific ideas about antiquity. The provision of essential information, usually not of great length, with selected images and explanations given at special points constructs popular knowledge on the site and also a basic part (see below chapter 3) of the tourist experience itself.

Yet to what extent do books and tours reiterate established “myths”? Are they based on the reproduction of recognisable signs or do they introduce new ones?

### **-The historical confirmation of the “royal” myth**

*The centre of the Minoan civilisation was Knossos, where excavations have revealed the actual palace of King Minos with its well-stocked magazines, royal apartments, shrines, the large central court and the Throne Room, in which the throne of Minos was discovered, the oldest throne in Europe.*

Anna Michailidou, archaeologist

*Knossos: A Complete Guide to the Palace of Minos*, 2002: 8

In Evans's interpretation of Knossos the ancient myths found an actual and very specific material home: King Minos resided in *this* palace, he sat on *this* throne, and

his wife took her bath in *this* basin. Following the scholar, almost all guidebooks and tour guides keep to Evan's convictions, similarly identifying the myth with the remains while some of them, especially those written by Greek archaeologists, unite the Minoan with the Greek world, or the "Greek miracle" (see for example Logiadou-Platonos 1986: 23) in a chronological and etiological sequence, as in the following passage from a recently published guidebook on Knossos:

In the year 2000, one hundred years will have passed since the great excavations at Knossos and Phaistos, which brought the Minoan civilisation to light. This civilisation has been correctly described as the oldest in Europe and it is one of the greatest in the world. Many are gradually acknowledging its brilliant impact on the Hellenic world, considering that in combination with the Mycenaean civilisation it constituted the solid basis for the evolution of Hellenic civilisation. (Vassilakis 2001: 5, my translation)

With similar, strictly evolutionary, "orthogenetic"<sup>4</sup> characterisations, a series of Minoan achievements are presented as the first of their kind in the European cultural construct. For example, Evans's so-called "theatre area" is presented by an English-speaking guide as "the first theatre in Europe, the forerunner of Greek theatres and stadiums" while another English-speaking guide informed his group that "in the storehouses, the oldest wine in Europe was stored" and so forth. The cultural and chronological primacy of the Minoan culture in the European scene remains a major issue even in recent guidebooks.

Yet the myth does not end with King Minos. One of the books locally sold informs its readers that "the palace of Idomeneus has not been found yet" (Logiadou-Platonos 1986: 22-23).<sup>5</sup> In a similar vein, a helmet on display at the Heraklion museum was pointed out by an English-speaking guide as "the one mentioned by Homer as belonging to Mirionis", i.e., another mythical hero of the Trojan War.

Statements regarding the grandeur of the Minoan civilisation often appear in books (especially the older ones) and are heard during most guided tours. Descriptions of

---

<sup>4</sup> The term refers to the explanation of social change according to which the simplicity of technology is equated to "low" social stratification (Wenke 1982 cited in Hamilakis 2002b: 11).

<sup>5</sup> I.e, King Minos's grandson who, according to *The Iliad*, took part in the Trojan War with eighty ships.



objects and buildings are filled with superlative adjectives and expressions in addition to those regarding the antiquity of the numerous Minoan attainments. Therefore, the golden *bee pendant* found near the palace of Malia, is “the finest piece of jewellery in the museum” (tour guide); the colourful *Kamares ware* characterising many Minoan clay vessels is “the most decorative pottery style in the world” (Logiadou-Platonos 1986: 18); the giant medallion storage jars were presented by an Italian-speaking guide as the “four largest amphorae in Europe” and the Minoan “fast ships took agricultural products and Cretan artworks everywhere *in the then civilised world*” (Logiadou-Platonos 1986: 19, emphasis added).

The chronological primacy of Minoan culture in the territory of modern Europe and the technical and aesthetic characteristics of some of its artefacts seem to be major assets in the representation of Cretan antiquity as Europe’s ancestral past.

#### **- Minoan life and social organisation**

*In those times there was the famous pax minoica, so this is the only fresco with a militaristic subject.*

Italian-speaking guide presenting a fresco with “eight-shaped” shields at Knossos

A common feature connecting most guidebooks is the explanation, or more often the lack of explanation, of social change. The transition from the pre-palatial period to that of the first palaces is seen as the result of a sudden change which caused the concentration of power in a few places, those called palatial centres (Kofou 1989: 40). Often the construction of the “palaces” is linked to possible migrations in the Aegean and Asia Minor, which presumably obliged the Cretans to unite under a handful of kings (ibid.).

The vast majority of books and tour guides adopt Evans’s certainty that a king and his family were the main residents of the complexes. They ascribe to the ruler the

double role of the Priest-King as Evans envisaged him (Kofou 1989: 50), ensuring the cultural, commercial and artistic development of the people (see Fig. 17) through constant peace:

There was a hierarchy among these priest-kings with the ruler of Knossos at the top. Thanks to that system, a continuous peace, the famous PAX MINOICA, was established which made the great cultural evolution, the happy sophisticated life and the Minoan thalassocracy possible. The neo-palatial art is mainly naturalistic and shows the love and inner spiritual identification of the Minoan people to the powerful, eternal and ever-reviving nature. (Logiadou-Platonos 1986: 20, my translation.)

The existence of weapons, therefore, has to be justified either as a sign of the arrival of the “warlike Mycenaeans” in late Bronze Age or as “irregular” objects.

Not all guides, however, emphasise the view of a continuous peace in Minoan Crete. Occasionally, when the representation of the complexes goes beyond the simple reading of royal rooms, some economic-redistributive interpretations are mentioned.<sup>6</sup> In these cases, the “palaces” are presented as centres simultaneously combining all sorts of possible functions in one building: political, religious, economic and administrative.

### **-Past and present in a whole**

Finally, authors of guidebooks and tour guides alike, following a tendency also observed in folklore studies and the overall nationalistic discourse of Greece, note features that bring the past and present of Crete into the same cultural sequence.

---

<sup>6</sup> The redistribution interpretative model in archaeology has been inspired by Colin Renfrew's book *The Emergence of Civilization* (1972). His theory sanctioned the notion of a highly centralised society in Minoan Crete founded on a palace-based economic organisation. Neo-evolutionary concepts were particularly relevant to this model: Minoan society evolved progressively from simpler to more centralised and hierarchical management of local resources as it moved from the pre-palatial times to the establishment of chiefdoms during the first and then the second palace period (See Hamilakis 2002b: 12-13). The emphasis on the economic role of the palaces was later to become even more prominent in environmental theories of social security as well as adaptation and handling of risk by elite groups in periods of crisis. These theories, however, are never mentioned in tours and guidebooks.

Even those books which are dedicated only to historical material remains and monuments tend not to omit or dismiss the presence of modern Cretans as bearers of an age-long culture which started in the Minoan period. Thus, the Cretan landscape and culture become a “promising land” for those who visited it even once, as the introduction of an archaeological guidebook informs the readers:

A few years passed [i.e., after the end of WWII] and the one-time conquerors became friends. Many of them...came back with their wives, their children, their friends alongside thousands of other foreigners from all over the world to see again the wild and proud mountains, the cheerful or rippling seashore, the peaceful valleys, the deep gorges, the magical ancient cities, the unique works of art in the museums, the straightforward and alert glance of its people; to taste again the delicious crops of the land and the sweet Cretan wine. ...It is not inaccurate to say that those who have been to Crete once, friends or enemies, keep inside them nostalgia for a lost homeland, that those who have come here once, return. (Logiadou-Platonos 1986: 46, my translation)

The excerpt refers to the German conquerors of Crete who returned to the island as tourists. The essence of the island changed the conquerors into friends. This perhaps over-idealised image of Crete expresses its commonly perceived culture of the place as embracing the ancient monuments, but also the landscape, the food and the people. Guidebooks to Crete, especially those written by Greek authors, tend to mix past and present practices to a great extent. Their style differs significantly from that encountered in books on other Greek places, such as Athens, where the narratives on the admirable classical past and that on a disappointing present are completely distinguished from each other (Travlou 2002).

As a matter of fact, tour guides, who frequently spot similarities between ancient practices and recent folklore traditions that “*still take place in some villages*”, find themselves in the position of having to justify the negative aspects of Cretan modernity when seen against the backdrop of the Minoan achievements. The absence of forests, the rude behaviour and profiteering of the locals, the consequences of mass tourism and the unpleasant image of modern cities signify some of the embarrassing “ruptures” of modern Crete from its famous past which are noticed not only by tourists but by many Cretans as well.

### **III. POWERFUL IMAGES: BROCHURES AND POSTCARDS**

*Crete, “the island of Miracles”.*

From a brochure by the Greek National Tourism Organisation

Innumerable images of Knossos circulate: in books, brochures and pamphlets, on postcards and posters, or accompanying different types of travelogues and presentations of the island. These images “make” and “remake” the island’s major monument and people’s knowledge of it. This “constructive” function is obvious in the different, dominant, photographic paradigms noted in the last 80 years in the ways the monument – itself basically unaltered since the completion of Evans’s work – has been pictured.

Thus Cretan brochures and postcards are particularly useful for a “semiotic ethnography” (see Dann 1996: 61). Apart from Knossos, they normally include images of a handful of other famous Minoan objects and frescoes.<sup>7</sup> These can either occupy the whole space of a picture or part of it alongside other images of Crete and/or the area of Heraklion (Fig. 18 and 19): beaches, gorges, churches, Venetian monuments and, in many cases, Cretan dancers in traditional costumes, presenting them as the “authentic locals” (Fig. 20 and 21).

The juxtaposition of the Knossian ruins, with “proud Cretans” and scenes of unspoilt landscapes and rural scenes of a pre-industrial past “surviving” in the present also project the impression of unity between past and present. In a way, Crete is portrayed as starting with Evans’s reconstructions and ending with the “traditional” Cretans. Figure no 22, for instance, is from an archaeological guidebook and shows two “Cretan girls in local dress” (Kofou 1989: 7) eating grapes in a field in front of the ruins of Knossos. As the text informs us (ibid: 4): “almost all Cretans, especially

---

<sup>7</sup> The *Priest-King*, the *Parisienne*, the *Blue Ladies*, the *Dolphins* and the *Bull-leaping* frescoes, the *Phaistos disc*, the *Snake Goddess* statuette, the pendant with the two bees from Malia and vases with lively floral motifs and octopuses as well as the libation vase from Knossos presenting the head of a bull.

those living in the small towns and the villages, maintain their traditional customs and habits”. The picture portrays local costumes and habits, if one can argue so, with the Cretan girls wearing local costumes. Rather sensually, the girls taste one of the most significant local products in front of the most famous local monument. The whole *mise-en-scène* explicitly visualises the perception of modern Crete as a place of living traditions.

This dualism between modernity and tradition, often embedded in the notion of cultural continuity, is found not only in books written for the tourist market, generally accused of “staged” and/or stereotypical depictions, but also in books addressed to a local readership. The comprehensive collection *Crete* (Papageorgiou 1964, second edition 2001), a book combining pictures and articles written in Greek about all cultural facets of Crete (history, literature, art, folk culture, music, Renaissance theatre, poetry, archaeology, biographies of important Cretans, presentation of the natural characteristics of the island, stories from the Ottoman and German occupations, the Battle of Crete, etc.), has a characteristically emblematic cover (Fig. 23). On it, the selection of images is indicative of the popular face of Crete: Eleftherios Venizelos, the most prominent political figure in Greece’s modern history; El Greco, the Cretan painter who worked in Renaissance Italy and Spain (i.e., places of admirable Western art), the Venetian harbour of Rethymnon; a drawing of Kazantzakis; the *Snake Goddess*; and one of the three *Blue Ladies* fresco from Knossos.

Usually, the colour red prevails. Inspired by its use in Minoan artworks and reinforced by Evans’s restorations, red dominates the layout and style of a variety of visual references either to Knossos or even to the whole island (Fig. 24). The natural environment, especially the sea, is another common background for such postcard and brochure imagery. The visual message is often that of a place with multiple faces, capable, therefore, of meeting all types of tourist demands and expectations and covering the cultural and natural material heritage of Crete diachronically. Thus, on one of the recent brochures circulated by the Greek National Tourism Organisation (E.O.T.), the picture of the dolphin fresco is set within a much larger photo of a clear, inviting seascape (Fig. 25), alluding to the link between Minoan art and Cretan landscape, both major tourist attractions. The vineyards and the olive

groves are also undisputable signs of a natural landscape within which the monument of Knossos can exist and “authenticate” not only the tourist experience but also, as we shall see, the rhetoric of Cretan identity.

### **- Aspects of the iconographic discourse on Knossos**

*The images define what is beautiful, what should be experienced and with whom one should interact. Understanding the people of tourism is thus, above all else, an analysis of images.*

Dann 1996: 79

The vast majority of postcards, brochures and guidebooks depict the rebuilt parts of the monument or consist of colourful sketches, the oldest of which are included in Evans’s “Palace of Minos” (1921-1936). Obviously, the emphasis put on the reconstructions makes things look more impressive; their overwhelming presence on books and brochures help to “sell the site” more efficiently. As a tour guide said *“it’s a great fortune for us [i.e. modern Cretans in general and the tour guides in particular] that Evans intervened in such a catastrophic way: we have something to show”*. Although the guide is aware of the controversies regarding the Knossian reconstructions, she approaches them as a necessary evil in the tourist market. Similarly, Mr. Vassilis Drossos, one of the most active photographers on Crete, explained to me that the vast majority of his postcards depict Knossos, precisely because of the reconstructed sections *“so that the visitor can buy the picture of something not only characteristic but also appreciated”*. Through Evans’s interpretative interventions, Knossos has become a recognisable, more easily explainable and sold commodity.

In effect, the imagery of restored Knossos attempts to combine the ruined with the deceptively impressive element of a well-preserved monument. Inherent in this iconographic discourse is the call to admire a very old, albeit still standing, structure. This is in compliance with Evans’s pursuit to offer a general idea of the Minoan appearance of the palace but without eliminating the sense of the allegedly authentic

and the picturesque. The missing parts of the monument (namely the non-fully rebuilt) are meant to prove its “antiquity”, just like a modern piece of furniture imitates, through rough polishing and asymmetrical edges, an antique just rescued from decay.

In this context, the image of the rebuilt north entrance of the palace, otherwise known as the “North Portico” – with its two levels, the unfinished roof and zigzag back wall, the three completed and the two fragmentary (i.e., not restored to their full height like the others) red columns and the copy of the bull fresco on relief – dominates in the imagery of Knossos that circulates (Fig. 26). The North Portico gives an idea of a key section of the palace, i.e., the entrance. It also suggests the presumed style of decoration in Minoan times, the complexity of architectural components, the colours possibly used in the past, and of course the “artistic flair of the Minoans”<sup>8</sup> as guides and teachers say when they describe the fragment of the fresco attached to its back wall. The North Portico is characteristic in all the senses of this assertion whereas it exemplifies the concept of ruin as formulated in European modernity (see Papadopoulos 2005, cf. Rajan 1985): it is complete and fragmented at the same time; it is “ancient” but “unexpectedly well-preserved”; it is a standing structure amidst a landscape of other ruins. Besides, it is above ground level, so that pictures can be taken easily. It can be combined visually with views of other parts, giving the sense of complexity when looking at the variable heights of the palace sections.

Changes in the aesthetics of postcards and guidebook pictures of Knossos involve a growing emphasis on natural elements, especially in the 1990s. This aesthetic tendency in the visual representation of the monument echoes a shift in the tourists’ more “greened” quests during their stay in Crete and adds a new element to what both the local population and its tourist industry want to project. The emphasis once given to the man-made architectural and artistic works – intending to stress the contribution of the Minoans to the European culture – is now given to the harmonious co-existence of a sophisticated, ancient technology with nature. From the postcards of the 1960s and 1970s focusing on the technical features of the

---

<sup>8</sup> This is another frequent phrase used by teachers and guides at the site.

Minoan architecture as reflected in the restorations, photographers now produce larger pictures with clearer and more intense colours, usually stressing the unity of whole sections rather than specific isolated areas of the complex. These photographs include the sky, the nearby green slopes, the trees and the vegetation and sometimes Mt Juktas at the back (Fig. 27, 28). Contrasts between the red of the columns, the blue of the sky and the green of the vegetation are clearly highlighted. A man-made creation is presented within a nature-made environment, although, of course, neither of them is such.



## 2. MINOAN ANTIQUITY AND THE DOMAIN OF PUBLIC CULTURE

*By public culture we mean a new cosmopolitan arena that is a “zone of contestation” [where] different classes and groups formulate, represent, and debate what culture is (and should be). Public culture is articulated and revealed in an interactive set of cosmopolitan experiences and structures, of which museums and exhibitions are a crucial part.*

Appadurai and Breckenridge 1999: 407

Surrounded by prestige and (more often than not) uncontested scientific authority, the Heraklion museum exhibition, the academic publications by the numerous Minoanists and the presentation of the archaeological site of Knossos by specialists constitute markers of the place, its status and significance. Yet people's opinions on the meaning of the archaeological past of Crete are grounded not only in these expressions of “high culture”. Diverse representations of the major Minoan monuments are also meaningfully present in less formal discourses which have embraced Minoan imagery, symbols and archaeological information to a great extent. Their role on everyday products, cultural activities, ephemera, commodities and other “habitual forms of conduct” (Bennett 1998: 28 cited in Edensor 2002: vi) actualise some of the meanings attributed to the local archaeological heritage by the Cretan society.

Popular culture inspired by ancient objects and monuments is often criticised as kitsch, temporal and inauthentic, or it is simply thought of as having secondary importance. This attitude is particularly strong in Greece, where such types of daily cultural expressions are generally dismissed as “archaeo-folklore” meant for naïve tourists. Popular culture is contrasted to the “genuine” folk traditions of the Greek people living in rural areas, whereas essentialised references to the latter made

mainly by folklorists and amateur researchers allude to romantic feelings of sociability and solidarity that have been lost in our modern individualist society.

Nevertheless, diverse forms of “Minoan-based” popular culture, which sometimes are produced by its most fervent critics, are deeply implicated not only in the construction of Knossos as a tourist place but also in the “materialisation” of Cretanness (cf. Appadurai and Breckenridge 1988, 1996, Billig 1995, Edensor 2002, Foster 2002, Hall 1997c). These forms have become symbols of Crete that connote the “structure of feeling” for the island, to use Raymond Williams’s terms (1973), among both tourists and locals.

In the following pages, I shall present some of these “mundane” uses of Cretan archaeological elements in consumption practices, media programmes and other popular culture expressions, taking into consideration that their meanings will accompany us in all the following chapters.

## **I. EMBLEMS AND ICONIC ELEMENTS**

*Why, ladies and gentlemen, are we making the airport of Heraklion look like a clown, hanging this enormous advertisement of an alcohol-containing drink, which is even a foreign drink? Is this a [proper] way to receive foreigners? Couldn't we put [an image of] Knossos with its columns or something else in order to welcome them? Or, at least, [couldn't we put] an advertisement for the Cretan olive oil?*

“Radio Crete”, 31-5-2002.

This was a comment made by a Cretan journalist on the morning programme of one of the most popular radio channels on the island, one that explicitly illustrates the primary position of Knossos in representing Crete. The journalist argues that the presence of a huge advertisement of a foreign drink at the main airport of the island is inappropriate, almost ridiculous and culturally irrelevant when welcoming foreign visitors. It stands for the drinking culture of the West, that is, something very distant from the values and the history of the Cretan land. The journalist raises issues of lack of authenticity and seriousness in the symbolic representation of the island in the eyes of foreigners. He suggests the image of the columns of Knossos or, equally old and now rediscovered for its properties, Cretan olive oil as an appropriate and representative welcome. Knossos, however, is even better as it comes first in importance: its restored columns are famous, recognisable, significant and welcoming. Their image efficiently encompasses that of the whole island.

As in the tourist brochures and Cretan postcards, the red columns, together with the “consecration horns”,<sup>9</sup> the Phaistos disc and the ideogram of the double axe are the most popular Minoan symbols used in Crete. They have acquired an importance equal to symbolic objects drawn from recent and more “lived” traditions of Crete, such as the male costume, the fringed kerchief, the boots, the men’s knives, etc.<sup>10</sup> In other words, local collective practices have adopted “academic” objects, some of

---

<sup>9</sup> The so-called “consecration horns” were Minoan religious symbols.

<sup>10</sup> All these are still worn during performances of traditional dances, i.e., a very popular activity among Cretans of all ages.

which are considered totally invented by the archaeological imagination, transforming them into local “traditions”.

These objects have gradually become cultural signs shared by Cretan people both on the island and abroad. They are present in all kinds of “typically” Cretan representations, official and unofficial, diasporic activities and maps, and not least in archaeological exhibitions of Minoan objects (see Fig. 29, 30). The column in particular is used as the Cretan equivalent of the ancient Greek classical temples, examples of which are very few on Crete and seem rather unimpressive when compared to those of mainland Greece. Although none of these Minoan columns has survived in its original form, their persistent reproduction visualises a glorious, collective Cretan past that is even older than that implied by the Greek temple. Thus they substitute the classical-looking columns in important public buildings, e.g., schools, the memorial of Cretan heroes at Heraklion, etc. (Fig. 31). Replicas of Knossos are used as background for gatherings of Cretan migrant associations as well as in public ceremonies for the reception of prominent foreigners (Fig. 32, 33), etc., or when hosting important civic events. A few days before the opening of the Olympic Games in July 2004, a model of the “tripartite shrine” based on the one previously reconstructed by Evans was put in front of the museum. It served as decoration for the reception of the Olympic flame in the city of Heraklion and the public show of Cretan traditional dances that followed the ceremony.

These emblematic Minoan elements are central to experiencing and performing Cretanness also on a more personal level. As a common convention, modern style buildings meant for private residences are seen decorated in the aforementioned colours (i.e., red and russet) or with “Knossian style” columns made out, quite ironically, of the same material as in Evans’s reconstructions, i.e., concrete (Fig. 34, 35). The restored and heavily contested image of the Priest-King, the double axe, the consecration horns, the Phaistos disc (Fig. 36, 37) or even the term “Minoan” indicate the Cretan fabrication or provenance of a variety of products, simply the location of a business headquarters on the island or even the Cretan origin of a company and/or its owner, although some of these products may well not have any relation to the Minoan society, as for example “Minoan Plastics”.

Even in cases with no intention at all to allude to the Minoan antiquity, the red-russet colour is associated with Knossos. For example, the colour of some recently renovated houses at Archanes is explained by some of the village's visitors as an imitation of the "Knossian" red, though it is an intentional reference to the aspect these houses had in Venetian times.<sup>11</sup> Actually, the overwhelming presence of the Minoan emblematic features in everyday life has led to a commonly accepted, somewhat unquestioned, process of signification of the island and its culture.

---

<sup>11</sup> Personal communication with Prof. Yannis Sakellarakis.

## **II. ACTIVITIES BASED ON ANCIENT THEMES:**

### **COLLECTIVE SELF-DISPLAY AND PERFORMATIVE MEMORY**

The search for continuities to the ancient past, although gradually abandoned by archaeologists, remains strong in popular discourses. Much more than a marketing technique of the tourism industry, links (invented or not) to Minoan antiquity are often employed to explain the origins of several, recent Cretan traditions.

The enormous Cretan clay vessels (“pitharia”) used until the Sixties for the storage of oil and wine fall into this category of “enduring” local material culture. Their striking similarities with the Minoan storage jars (“pithoi”) had already been noticed by Evans, who visited several places to study them closely (Fig. 38). Since then, archaeological and folklore studies accounts have considered these vessels a thousand-year-long Cretan practice.

Yet what is striking in the case of these vessels is that the art of jar-making, which since the Fifties (i.e., when modern materials replaced clay) has been in almost complete decline in Crete, is now being revived. Jars are now in use not for storage but for decoration purposes and seem indispensable in most representations of traditional Cretan households. Potters have returned to Thrapsano, a village once famous for its pottery located 32 km south of Heraklion, where they founded corresponding professional associations. Every year they organise cultural activities that promote the similarities of the Thrapsaniote “pitharia” to the famous Minoan jars (Fig. 39). During the annual “festival of the Thrapsaniote potter”, a non-touristy fair, Cretan entertainment with traditional music and dances of the kind seen everywhere in Crete in summer is combined with a commercial exhibition of vases and other clay objects.<sup>12</sup>

This commodification of local culture that is put on display by no means contradicts the meaning of this revived tradition as seen by many Cretans. As Tilley has shown

---

<sup>12</sup> See the local newspaper “Tolmi” 12-7-87.

in the case of the Small Nambas in Vanuatu, who perform their customs for a mixed, global audience of visitors in order to make some profit, these activities, although they “invent” local traditions, also objectify, negotiate and transform them. The performative display of local cultures in the periphery of modern “travelscapes” allows people to construct and define their self-images and empower their identities (1999: 239-259).

This double character of performed traditions that link past and present go beyond projected similarities between ancient and recent material forms. These forms extend to a plethora of cultural initiatives such as the shows of Cretan culture put on by respected, local, non-profit institutions. The “Sacred Drama: A Minoan Ritual Ceremony”, a show presented by the *Lyceum of Greek Women of Heraklion* is one such typical example.

The *Lyceum*, since its foundation at the end of the nineteenth century as a bourgeois cultural society of well-to-do ladies, attempts to support Greek traditions and encourage charitable activities. Up to today, all of its local annexes set up nationwide form the best-known places for learning traditional dances and, to a lesser extent, handicrafts, such as embroidery, lace and jewellery making.

In 1959, for the first time in its history, the Heraklion annex put on a show which was not inspired by the local folklore. The “Sacred Drama: A Minoan Ritual Ceremony” was based on archaeological information provided by the then Supervisor of Antiquities, N. Platon and it involved the collaboration of a renowned local painter and a musician. The initiative was repeated in 1995 when the annex decided to revive the old show, this time in a new style (Fig. 42). The Cretan choreographer Mary Houlaki returned then to Heraklion precisely for this purpose from Athens, where she had lived for years.<sup>13</sup> The “*Ritual*”, as is briefly referred to by the young amateur dancers who take part in it, is now incorporated into the Lyceum’s shows of typical Cretan dances, titled “4000 Years of Greek Cretan Culture”. On these grounds, the archaeological heritage of Crete does not differ from local traditions; on the contrary, it becomes an integrated part of them. This is

---

<sup>13</sup> Mrs Houlaki will appear again in chapter 4.

in accordance with the cultural politics of the Lyceum, which encourages the stressing of similarities between past and recent years, when people “were closer to their traditions and not overwhelmed by the Western way of life”, as a member of its committee explained to me.

A view of the crafts held in the main building of the Lyceum (which I visited in order to attend the preparations for the “*Ritual*”) revealed another aspect of this unique adaptation of archaeological motifs into traditional Cretan culture. Next to a rich display of local costumes and furniture, fine embroideries reproduce Minoan themes in extremely fine techniques. They were made by well-off, educated Cretan women, as was the fashion from the 1920s until the early 1950s. In this environment of extreme “syncretism”, amidst the objects of the Lyceum’s astonishing collections, the young dancers get dressed in costumes drawn from Minoan seals, statuettes and frescoes and then are made-up like the *Parisienne* and the *Priest-King*, the famous frescoes from Knossos.

The show starts with a folk dance called “geranos”, whose very unusual – for Greek music – rhythm of 5/4 has led some researchers to trace its origins in antiquity.<sup>14</sup> The choreographer, who herself had learned to dance the *geranos* at the Lyceum when she was a teenager, decided to add it to the last version of the “*Ritual*”. The dancers appear on stage with their Minoan costumes and in a suggestive way introduce the audience to the Bronze Age times through a link to the recent folk customs (Fig. 43, 43). Moreover, several of the “*Ritual*’s” steps are inspired by old women mourning at Cretan funerals, as the choreographer remembers them from her childhood. The lady noted that the British traveller, Pashley, who travelled to Crete in the eighteenth century, mentioned such scenes from the island’s rural areas in his work.

As Connerton has argued, “an image of the past, even in the form of a master narrative, is conveyed and sustained by ritual performances” (1989: 70). In the case of the “*Minoan Ritual*”, recent and ancient pasts are symbolically linked in the context of a momentous dance performance given by a highly esteemed local

---

<sup>14</sup> For a multifaceted analysis of ritual dances and Minoan ceremonies, see Lekatsas 2001 [1964]. Lekatsas’s article published on the volume *Crete* (Papageorgiou 2001 [1964], see above) has influenced several modern Cretans’ views on Minoan spirituality.



institution. The implementation and the – largely creative – adaptation of Minoan elements strengthen and visualise the “attempt at public, virtuosic, and at times agonistic *performance*” of a diachronic Cretan cultural identity.<sup>15</sup> Like other cultural events, it aims to bring the Minoan past into the realm of a “constructed”, civic, historical memory.

The Lyceum’s show, the reception of the 2004 Olympic flame inside the archaeological site and the peace parades that start at Knossos and end in front of the government buildings of Heraklion – connecting in a straight line the past and present of Crete – form a symbolic ground where the prospective aspects of this memory can develop: the meanings of local identity can be successfully played out as they are connected with local acts for an imagined, hopefully better, future.

#### **- Variations: The figure of Zeus**

*“In the echo of the cultural events “Dictaeon 2001”, unique at Psychro and the Lassithi Plateau in general, the board of the Psychro Cultural Association, “Hospitable Zeus”, feels the need to express its warmest thanks to all those who helped to make the splendour of ancient Greece shine on Mt Dikti next to the cradle of the Cretan-born Zeus; also, to those who helped to revive our local tradition and promote the athletic idea...*

*We are obliged, against all odds, to continue here, at the Bethlehem of ancient faith, to produce culture by respecting our age-long cultural heritage, mainly for the younger generations; and to continue to struggle for the promotion of the cultural ideal of our place.”*

Local Newspaper “Nea Kriti” (10-10-2001: 26)

This insert was published after the success of the cultural and sport events “Dictaeon”, which in 2001 were organised for the fourth consecutive time by the cultural association of the village of Psychro in eastern Crete. The place is located

---

<sup>15</sup> I have borrowed this phrase from Lambropoulos’s analysis of the relevant use of ancient elements in Modern Greek poetry (see Van Steen 2002: 177).

next to the Diktaean cave, a site on the Lassithi Plateau which has been considered the “cradle of the Cretagenes (Cretan-born) Zeus” and already in the late nineteenth century had attracted the attention of several ambitious archaeologists, including Evans.

The figure of Zeus, however, is associated with one more cave, the Idean, this time on Mt Ida, in central Crete. Remains found at both sites are seen as giving sufficient credibility to the ancient legends about the god and have caused a half-serious or half-humorous conflict between these two areas competing for being the “true” birthplace of Zeus, hence the characterisation “Bethlehem of the ancient faith” (Fig. 44). The metaphor, which symbolically unites Zeus with Jesus, is used not only by the inhabitants *and* the archaeologists of Psychro but also by those at Anogia, the closest town to the Idean cave.<sup>16</sup>

This is an “appropriation” that causes a feeling of bitterness to eastern Cretans. For example, the founder of a private, theme park recently opened at the foot of Mt Dikti explained to me that this metaphor when used in Anogia “is plagiarised”. Interestingly, several books and web sites by amateur history researchers deal with the issue, passionately suggesting either cave as Zeus’s birthplace.<sup>17</sup>

In relation to these sites, the myth of the Kouretes, the daemonic creatures of Greek mythology who protected Zeus from his father Cronus in either of the above caves, has received exceptional importance locally.<sup>18</sup> On the occasion of the 2004 Olympic Games that were held in Greece, these mythological creatures have been promoted as the founders of athletic games hundreds of years before those in Olympia. During the shows organised in eastern Crete for the reception of the Olympic flame in 2004, an ancient prayer, *the Hymn to the Kouretes*, was sung in a public ceremony. The

---

<sup>16</sup> Anogia is famous nationwide as the Cretan place par excellence for its heroic resistance against the Turkish and the German occupations, as well as for the local customs associated with the widely practiced pastoralism.

<sup>17</sup> See for example a reader’s protest letter published on the Local newspaper, Messogios (10/7/2001). According to the reader Zeus “was not only born but also bred in Lasithi”. (From [www.kairatos.com/afieromata](http://www.kairatos.com/afieromata), acc. 14/12/2006).

<sup>18</sup> According to the myth, when Rhea gave birth to Zeus she hid him from Cronus in the cave. The Kouretes covered the baby’s cries by dancing and playing drums. Cronus did not realise the existence of this son who would replace him as the leader of gods and humans.

mayor of the nearby city of Sitia presented his homeland to the national TV channel as having important differences from western Crete and reminded the audience of the Minoan origins of the area (11-7-2004, ERT National TV programme).

On the other hand, Zeus was the thematic focus of the cultural events “Giacynthia” in 2001, a festival held annually at Anogia and Mt Ida since the early 1990s. In that year, the relationship of the god with Mt Ida and the Idean cave were highlighted in a series of events. With the participation of archaeologists and philologists, a conference was held on the circle of life of the mythical god, while a documentary about the excavations in the cave was projected at the main square of the town. The following evening, an event with local folk dances and music took place with Cretan musicians playing drums, a clear reference to the “virile” Kouretes (Fig. 46). This took place at an open-air location on the slopes of Mt Ida, next to some shepherds’ huts, the recently built picturesque church of St Giacynthus and the huge face of Zeus sculpted on the rock, commissioned for that purpose to a famous artist (Fig. 45). Ancient heritage, current practices and Christian-Orthodox faith were reconciled in the context of this original cultural initiative. To enhance this combination of faiths and practices, the location, halfway between Anogia and the Idean Cave, is next to a recently excavated Minoan site interpreted as a lodge for the ancient pilgrims on their way to the sacred cave. All festival events were free and attracted, in different proportions each time, the inhabitants of the village and the numerous friends of Crete and Anogia in particular, who participate in “Giacynthia” every year.

The figure of Zeus, the most venerated, “masculine” and powerful god of classical antiquity has here its honoured place and symbolically supersedes the female force of Mother Goddess, known from Knossos and other major Minoan sites. Mt Ida, on the slopes of which the town of Anogia is situated, is the area related more than any other place (with the exception perhaps of Sfakia in western Crete) with values and stereotypes of Cretan pride and the expression of masculinity among the members of the shepherd communities and *yeni*, i.e., lineages organised around the genealogical importance of agnates (see Herzfeld 1985, Tsantiropoulos 2004). Here, the connection of the local culture to the past is not attempted through fertility goddesses, artistic sentiment, peaceful rituals and other idyllic features of the

Minoan society, as Evans put them forward. The focus is on the nearby cave and the rough and masculine image of Zeus. Values of Cretanness as represented by the Anogian shepherds, such as honour, pride and hospitality are rhetorically combined with the figure of “Cretagenes” and “hospitable” Zeus. In this way, the area, which from an archaeological point of view is rather neglected, comes into the fore. It obtains a respected place in the archaeological scene of the island, which otherwise is overwhelmed by images of Knossos, and at the same time justifies positive current values or attempts to subvert negative stereotypes that many non-Cretans, or Cretans from other areas have about their place.

For eastern Crete, the cave of Psychro is an increasingly popular archaeological site to which local population assigns specific cultural ideals as well as expectations for tourist development. The Dictaen games and the ceremonies about peace before athletic games, etc. project some of them. The attempted association with Zeus, athletic ideals, and, again, with hospitality consolidates the image of eastern Cretans as peaceful and gentle people acting very differently from the “aggressive and bellicose” inhabitants of Mt Ida who “plagiarise” the connections to the ancient god.

As we shall see in chapter 4, this rhetoric is also employed in broader narratives of Cretan identity which place all references to antiquity in an interrupted cultural sequence, thus explaining many positive and negative aspects of the present.

### III. COMMERCIAL CULTURE

Although antiquities by no means can form the subject of direct economic transactions, Minoan ruins and artefacts *are* traded and exchanged everyday: they are bought and sold through the use of relevant imagery on a variety of products and through the evocation of antiquity as a moral argument in producing, buying, selling, or consuming specific products of the Cretan land.

First of all, the presence of Minoan imagery is a key visual feature in local advertising. As referents to the island and its long-lasting culture, these signs dominate aspects of popular culture when addressing the local market. The familiarity with Minoan images, especially those from Knossos, allows the launched products, even when unrelated to ancient times, to enter into people's everyday lives and their domestic domain as "naturalised" possessions (Fig. 47, 48, 49).

This tendency, however, is stronger when the products in question do have some link to the island's past. For example, *CretaShop*, an electronic shop specialising in the trading and distribution of local products via e-mail orders follows such rhetoric which reconciles ancient and more recent Cretan traditions with the dictates of modernity.<sup>19</sup> The range of goods on sale is indicative of what is typical of and about Crete: herbs grown only on the island (e.g., dittany), spices, raki, olive oil, t-shirts with Minoan patterns (the Phaistos disc, frescoes from Knossos, etc.), CDs with folk music in countless reproductions and finally books on local folklore, geography, history (e.g., the Battle of Crete) and archaeology. The shop appeals to expatriates who want to maintain their contacts with their homeland, people interested in Cretan products and culture and foreigners who have developed a special relationship with the place.<sup>20</sup> In other words, the customers are people who want to "keep" the island with them in material terms. Food, books, clothes, etc. suggest the materiality of

---

<sup>19</sup> The purposely made mantinada that advertises the shop on the web is remarkable in this respect: "I'm going to put a computer in the shepherd's hut, my lady, to sell the sheep's milk on the Internet" ("tha valo ipologisti kera mou sto mitato/gia na poulo me internet to gala to provato")

<sup>20</sup> See the e-shops's website: [www.cretashop.gr](http://www.cretashop.gr).

their contact with the homeland or the visited (or planned to be visited) place. The advertisement on the most cosmopolitan and globalised medium, the Internet, points to the existence or the strengthening of different senses of place and/or belonging to Crete, always through references to the ancient times. This is how the shop is presented by a Cretan lifestyle magazine which often includes topics related to the history of the island as well:

A dynamic entry on the Cretan web for CretaShop. We are talking about the very first Crete-focused, online shop and we have to admit that we were impressed both by the quality of the design and its aesthetics as well as by its functionality for the visitor and potential buyer. CretaShop, physically located in Heraklion, Crete, (more precisely in the contemporary Poros district, exactly where recent excavations have revealed the remnants of the port of Knossos, where Cretan products were exported in the Minoan era)... If we give a special mention on this site it is because Cretans prove themselves, once more, to lead in all domains...<sup>21</sup>

Historical information about Cretan antiquity validates this type of commerce. In the case of CretaShop, the significance assigned to Minoan culture resides not only in the products on sale but even in the current location of the company in a coastal residential district of modern Heraklion, which according to archaeologists in ancient times served as one of the two ports of Knossos. The identification of the area with allegedly enduring trading practices and the knowledge that specific products were used and traded in the times of the “first European civilisation” elevates the trade of Cretan products and integrates them in what Kopytoff has called “moral economy” (Kopytoff 1986). In it, economic and symbolic values are inextricably bound and the process of commoditisation of products related to antiquity presupposes the actual involvement of both types of values (cf. Appadurai 1986).

---

<sup>21</sup> *STIGMES, The Magazine of Crete*, issue no 56, January-February 2001. (From [www.cretashop.gr/pages.gr/comments](http://www.cretashop.gr/pages.gr/comments). acc. 14/12/2006).

**- The relation of Minoan imagery to some special commodities: oil and wine**

*Oh my Crete with your dittany,  
Your basil  
And your alluring  
Dazzling culture!*

*Italians are in black,  
They cry and go into mourning,  
Cretan olive oil  
Is unrivalled!*

Two mantinades as appeared on the website of the local newspaper “Patris”<sup>22</sup>

By its reader Y. Avlakitakis

Olive oil, grapes, wine and, to a lesser extent, honey and herbs are signs of obvious everyday habits, economic practices, symbolic values and local knowledge on the island. The appreciation, however, of these products by a growing foreign market and the tourists who visit the island every year, on the one hand, and the emphasis given to their properties by international medical discourses on healthy eating, on the other, have led to the correlation of this self-evident part of life to antiquity and some of its characteristic cultural images.

In particular, olive oil has been the focus of an increasing number of activities held on the island, focusing on the oil’s symbolic position in the making of Cretan identity and culture. Books are written and printed locally on the topic;<sup>23</sup> folklore museums include significant sections on oil-related activities; and congresses, schoolbooks and programmes of “environmental education” (introduced recently into the national curriculum) deal frequently with the “liquid gold of Crete”.

---

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.patris.gr/songs/13/5> acc. 14/12/2006, my translation.

<sup>23</sup> For an examination of Greek/Cretan cookbooks in the context of ecology and health issues and the negotiation of identities when “eating local”, see Ball 2003.

Moreover, all winners in the 2004 Olympic Games were awarded a wreath made from the branches of Cretan olive trees. According to the initial plans of the Olympic committee, which, however, were not realised due to practical difficulties, the first Marathon winner in the games would be awarded a special wreath made from a hundred year old olive tree in western Crete. The choice of the sport was not accidental: the Marathon is the most symbolic of all athletic events due to its ancient connotations. A replica of a Minoan ship, the “Minoa”, constructed by the Maritime Museum of Crete would carry the wreath from Crete to Athens with several Cretan youngsters volunteering as rowers.

The excitement caused in the last decades around the beneficial effect of olive oil and the Cretan diet in general has been further confirmed through archaeological information concerning nutrition in Minoan times. The subject has attracted particular attention in the last few years among academic researchers and the public, both local and international, and in 1999, Greek and foreign archaeologists produced a much-promoted exhibition entitled “Minoans and Mycenaeans: flavours of their time”.<sup>24</sup>

“The miracle of the Cretan diet, the most wholesome cuisine of the Mediterranean”, as a printed advertisement claims (see Fig. 50), is the focus of several events meant for a mixed audience of tourists and local people, while the discourse on Cretan cooking has now expanded to the rest of Greece and beyond. Luxury hotel restaurants on the islands have gradually revised the style of the food provided to their clients and Cretan dishes now re-appear in the place of Western-style cookery. The same is true of the food offered to participants at international conferences. Although it may seem odd, a special sign indicating the use of extra-virgin Cretan olive oil is awarded by the “Local (i.e., Cretan) Academy of Taste” to selected restaurants on the island that follow the principles of the Cretan diet. The fascination with Cretan cuisine is also obvious in Athens and Thessaloniki, where an increasing number of Cretan products shops have opened recently, some of them by Cretan

---

<sup>24</sup> National Archaeological Museum, Athens, 12 July-27 November 1999.



migrants.<sup>25</sup> Cretan restaurants, although still few in number, now compete for a place amongst the ethnic and fashionable restaurants of the capital. Even a new business based in Athens which offers dietary programmes to people who want to lose weight has adjusted its menus to the famous and beneficial rules of the Cretan diet (Fig. 51), promising impressive results.

Oil, olives, honey, fresh vegetables, grapes and red wine are marketed as healthy, delicious and grown under the Cretan sun. In addition, their use and cultivation go back to “the origins of civilisation”. In an interesting combination of two “ceremonial” activities in one, the above mentioned event for the welcoming of the Olympic flame at the Minoan site of Palaikastro in eastern Crete included, after the performance of the *Hymn to the Kouretes*, a culinary event: Cretan dishes from Minoan to recent times were prepared for the participants and, through the presence of local, national and international media, the area publicised its age-old, dietary products as related to a major national sport event, the Olympic Games. In this way, Crete internalises the national and global need for “genuine” and “pure” local products. At the same time, it re-presents itself to a national and international public by rediscovering its own cultural and culinary past.

Yet Cretan people are not only the producers of such products but also the consumers of such. Obviously, olive oil and wine are indispensable goods in most households. As long as the majority of the population own at least some olive trees and/or some vineyards, and, if not, they know someone else who does, oil and wine are normally used unbottled. The quality is seen as guaranteed since they are brought into the household by an immediate family member, a relative or a friend.

Nevertheless, in recent years some local products have re-entered Cretan households, especially in the major urban centres, in a different style and cultural meaning. These include fine wines produced by eponymous and certified factories, dairy products whose consumption is limited only to some rural areas, relatively forgotten herbs such as dittany, and even some vegetables which were collected or cultivated by

---

<sup>25</sup> More than one hundred shops selling Cretan products have opened outside Crete in the last ten years. Initially their clientele consisted mainly of Cretan people living in Athens but now they apply to people who love Cretan and organic food, Cretans or not. See for example Newspaper “TA NEA”, 27/10/2006, 58.

villagers in the countryside just for family consumption and were not for sale in the city markets. The promotion of these products is often complemented by a sophisticated use of Minoan imagery alluding to the high quality of these “pure and rural” goods. The “intellectuality” of Minoan imagery on them is more obvious when compared to the rough and very emblematic style of similar images (in terms of the subject) in the 1970s and 1980s. In those first decades of the Cretan tourist boom, Minoan images basically emphasised the antiquity of certain agricultural practices in order to grant prestige to products sold to tourists. At that time most Cretans showed indifference or contempt for such goods bought by a “naïve” and ignorant public. Nowadays, these seemingly pure goods are addressed to a public of knowledgeable (or well informed) people, both local and international, who are sensitive about the quality of the food they consume and who often have ecological concerns. Their lifestyle is based on elaborated concepts of Cretanness, authenticity and/or “researched” tourism (cf. Urry 1990: 14). Their habits are enhanced and strengthened by the promoted affinities of these products to the “noteworthy” past of Crete, a thousand-year-old, local knowledge and not least the “ecological” attitudes of its Minoan inhabitants.

Finally, the negotiation of local identity is also pertinent to the promotion of olive oil in the international market. Frequent discussions and articles in the local press refer to significant quantities of Cretan oil that circulate in Europe as Italian. The *mantinada* quoted above about the mourning Italians who realise that Cretan oil is unrivalled refers to dealers from the neighbouring country coming to Crete to bargain for high quality, local oil and then sell it worldwide at much higher prices. In these discourses, the deceiving presentation of the local oil as Italian coming from Tuscany means an unfair treatment of Crete in the global market. The proper branding of the oil is not only a claim for a (deserved) higher profit for the Cretan producers but also a sort of patriotic duty (see Edensor 2002: 111). Again, local identity generates meaning in the market and the market, in turn, encourages the re-evaluation and defence of Cretan products, the origins of which go far back into the past (cf. Foster 2002). Economic activities incorporate aspects of regional culture and assign to the island the features of a place deserving attention and appreciation in economic, symbolic and broadly cultural terms.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Everyday life in Crete presents a plethora of “encounters” with the Minoan past. Representations of Minoan material culture in visual, material and textual form constitute Cretan “familiar affordances” (Edensor 2002), i.e., they are part of a local habitual consensus about the significance of the past in the island’s present.

Most representations of Minoan Crete, both official and popular, are based on a selective use of Evans’s conceptualisation of Knossos and, to a much lesser extent, on the figure of Zeus. They are inspired by the scholar’s views of social organisation in Bronze Age Crete, as well as by his ideas about the original appearance of the finds and buildings he excavated at the beginning of the twentieth century. The Knossian reconstructions, indeed their most criticised parts, e.g., the tapered columns, the Priest-King, the extensive use of the colour red, etc., constitute the most diffused images of the island often forming “typical” Cretan landscapes. Their success and persuasiveness is such that they are also reduced to sketchy and summarised “ideograms”.

These meaningful signs are invested with strong metaphorical power. As part of a distinctive, locally shared knowledge, they stand for Crete, both ancient and present, in a “condensed” form. Paraphrasing Michael Billig’s notion of “banal nationalism” (1995), it can be argued that the popularity of these archaeological elements in Crete comprise a special kind of banal *regionalism*, i.e., one entangled in the everyday. This consists of “beliefs, assumptions, habits, representations and practices” (ibid: 6) and also routines and signifiers of Crete integrated into social action. Their “language”, especially in the forms of popular culture, reproduces self-evident, “naturalised” assumptions about the ownership of the ancient Cretan past and negotiates Cretan culture in relation to national and international issues.

Most of these representations draw on the ideology of folkloric continuities in the time span from Minoan to modern times. These are noticed in many current cultural contexts, in presentations of Minoan antiquity, in cultural activities and local discourses on Cretan traditional art, dancing, craftsmanship and, not least, in

nutritional habits, such as wine and olive oil consumption and, recently, some other aspects of the Cretan diet that have attracted considerable publicity. The use of the folkloric continuity concept supports the performance of local social values and identity by using “localised” versions of national narratives regarding the bond between ancient and modern culture. It also suggests the view of cultural variation within Crete (for example with the different “appropriations” of Zeus and the “athletic” Kouretes in the Mt Ida region and on the Lassithi plateau). At the same time, it symbolically defends economic practices such as tourism and trade.

Economic and symbolic values are, in effect, inextricably interrelated in the context of the politics surrounding Cretan heritage. This is particularly relevant to the use of Minoan imagery and archaeological information in the promotion of local products. Within the framework of an internationally growing demand for the local, the particular and the genuine, Crete represents and defines itself as capable enough of meeting it while also claiming its ancient history.

Finally, the fact that many of these Minoan archaeological features are used in tourism-related practices is by no means irrelevant to the shaping of Cretan identity. The choice of the content, style and audience of any “Minoan” representation not only influences the tourist’s approach to the past and the present of Crete, as will be shown in the next chapter, but also of those who produce, perform, or simply accept this representation. The projection of a specific, cultural image of Crete based on its Minoan heritage allows the negotiation of collective, historical memory, the objectification of local culture within current discourses on tradition and modernity and the making of a particularly Cretan sense of place on the global scene. In other words, this projection lies at the heart of most themes permeating this research.

### *Chapter 3*

#### **KNOSSOS AND THE TOURIST EXPERIENCE**

*Knowing a culture involves work of memory, interpretation and reconstruction.*

*And most significantly...it almost always involves travel.*

Rojek and Urry 1997: 12

Every year more than 1,300,000 people visit Knossos, making tourism the most popular social locale in which the monument is sensed, “sold”, interpreted and commented on. People queue for hours under the hot Cretan sun to see “the place of the first European civilisation” and to visit the usually very crowded Archaeological Museum of Heraklion. When we look at the reactions of decades of tourists consulting their guidebooks, standing patiently to see the “Throne Room” for some seconds before they are pushed along by those standing behind, asking about the level of authenticity of the current reconstruction, and trying to find the exit of the complex, Graburn’s (1977) and Horne’s (1984) metaphors for tourism as a form of modern pilgrimage inevitably come to mind. Knossos is undoubtedly a “great museum” (Horne 1984), visited by “tourist-pilgrims” who hold “devotional” texts, i.e., their guidebooks and feel obliged by modern “civilising rituals”, as Carol Duncan would suggest (1995), to see *and* appreciate the site.

Yet the impressive numbers of tourists raise some crucial questions about the meaning of their visit to Knossos, beyond the sense of a “tourist obligation”. How do they perceive the ancient monument and the represented past? What do they find most interesting, significant or relevant about their identity as tourists? Do they “create” Crete through their visit to this ancient site? Are the romantic quests of Sir Arthur Evans still critical to their perceptions of Minoan civilisation, and to what extent is myth important in them?

In the pages to follow I shall try to answer these questions by focussing on the ways tourists themselves frame their experience of Cretan archaeological heritage and refract it through the provided archaeological information. Inspired by a growing literature on *travelling* (Clifford 1992) and *touring* cultures (Rojek and Urry 1997), I shall trace the metaphorical transformations of Knossos into people's impressions and statements, feelings and ideas about the past and present of the island as these are drawn from a locally acquired knowledge.

Moreover, the interpretation of the site, the museum exhibition in nearby Heraklion, the guidebooks sold locally and the tours conducted by specialists stand exactly at the intersection of academic and popular conceptualisations of the Cretan Bronze Age as they bring academic knowledge within the visitor's experience. How do they influence or even manipulate it? In-depth interviews with a broad sample of Greek and foreign visitors, conducted at the site and the museum, provide a valuable source of information regarding the way the "tourist gaze" operates. Drawing on Selwyn (1996a, 1996b), MacCannell (1976, 1992) and others, my text also examines the general quest for authenticity during travel and museum visiting. Finally, particular attention is paid to a series of "aestheticisation" issues (cf. Barthes 1981, Bauman 1996), especially when tourists relate their visit to the monument to broader cultural and social values.

### **-Tourism in Crete**

Crete had already proved a very popular destination before the turn of the twentieth century and the period of autonomy (1900-1913). Scholars, archaeologists, art lovers, adventurers and ambitious collectors (see Farnoux 1996: 13-33) were amongst the first who travelled to the island and searched for the meaning of its ancient material remains. However, the island became a chief tourist destination only in the late 1950s, a time of general reorganisation and invigoration of Greek political and economic life. Within this economic context, tourism was deemed a significant source of income, and most importantly, of foreign currency, a policy which averted further abandonment of the rural areas of the country and of emigration abroad. Assuming that foreigners were visiting Greece as “pilgrims” intending to sanctify ancient Hellenism for its contribution to the Western world, the Greek state promoted antiquities as its main tourist attractions and reasons for travelling. Not accidentally, the Greek National Tourism Organisation continues to invest in the general appreciation of the country’s ancient past, though not as a form of “pilgrimage” but rather as a pleasant aspect of the tourist experience.<sup>1</sup>

Crete offers a variety of landscapes, beaches and folk “traditions” which are also promoted by the tourist industry, therefore, these, in conjunction with the significant historical and archaeological monuments, became the focus of an unprecedented local tourist development.<sup>2</sup> Foreign tourists now arrive directly in Crete – for many, the destination of their package holiday – without an intermediate stop in Athens. In the last twenty-five years, a massive expansion of tourist enterprises and services has taken place, which has led to changes in land uses, in architectural, demographic, economic and social patterns, as well as to the complete dependence of some areas on tourism and seasonal occupations.

---

<sup>1</sup> “Live your myth in Greece” was the slogan of the Greek NTO during its last two campaigns (2005-2006) with which it invited tourists to have pleasant, “mythical” experiences in a country associated with famous, ancient myths.

<sup>2</sup> More than two million tourists visit Crete every year. Especially after the last Olympic Games (August 2004), the rates increased significantly. According to recent data, only in the tourist season of 2006, 2.5 million people arrived by charter flights at the two international Cretan airports, at Heraklion and Chania. (See <http://www.patris.gr/articles/96435>, acc. 27/10/2006). For tourism in Crete and relevant data, see Andriotis 2001).

Since the early twentieth century, Knossos has been the main tourist attraction for Greek and foreign tourists on the island and a constant point of reference in all representations of Crete. Evans was the first to encourage an elite tourism of wealthy cosmopolitans to Knossos. He catered for them personally, guiding them around the site, showing the outstanding frescoes in the so-called “gallery” of the palace and offering tea in the “Throne Room” (Farnoux 1996).<sup>3</sup> Not least, the extended reconstruction project he undertook also aimed to promote the site and the whole Minoan culture to the eyes of an international public. The spectacular plan of a palace dated to the second millennium BC, the exceptional finesse of the Minoan artisanship and the charm exerted by some (never forgotten) myths such as those of the labyrinth and the Minotaur made of Knossos the most frequently visited place in Crete, the second most frequently visited archaeological site in Greece after the Athenian Acropolis and one of the most popular spots in Europe (Papadopoulos 1997). Mass tourism has not encountered serious problems in combining sea-sun-sand holidays with a visit to at least one historical site, ordinarily Knossos. Even the thousands of daily cruise passengers who arrive at the port of Heraklion in summer for just a five-hour stay in Crete are strongly encouraged and provided with the means to visit the monument.

---

<sup>3</sup> The first visitors to Knossos expressed mixed feelings about the discovered *palace*. Some of them, e.g. Evelyn Waugh and R. Collingwood, were disappointed by Minoan aesthetics and the “barbarously utilitarian, not Hellenically classical...Knossian modernity” (Collingwood cited in Cadogan, 2004). Others – who saw the ruins before the completion of the restoration – found that nothing “can really be called palatial” (Hazel Fennel in Brown 1983: 58; see also Edmond Pottier’s comments written in 1902, cited in Farnoux 1996: 44-45). Among the most enthusiastic early visitors were Sigmund Freud and Henry Miller. The latter found in Crete and its ancient ruins the authenticity and symbolic primitiveness that he was looking for in his travels to Greece (see 1941: 156-165). Miller compared Knossos and Phaistos to the classical monuments and considered the former more germane to modern sensibilities. His views match many modern tourists’ opinions.



### **-Some theoretical and methodological concerns**

Tourism is neither a separate nor an autonomous branch of the social sciences, but a recently emerged thematic category in the discipline (see Rojek and Urry 1997: 5, Urry 1990: 1, Tsartas 1996). Specifically, the tourist visit to places of historical interest is linked to the performance of social, cultural, national and local identities (Urry 1990, 1995, Selwyn 1996b, Rojek and Urry 1997, Boissevain 1996, Burns 1999, Meethan 2001, Coleman and Crang 2002) as well as to issues of time, space, mobility and the making of post-modern “scapes”. It is, in other words, a social and cultural phenomenon, or rather a set of phenomena interconnected with a variety of other practices and discourses pertaining to the “social life” of the visited place.

A great deal has been written about the validity of tourism as subject of ethnographic research. Conducting interviews with people the ethnographer meets only once and who may have the most varied ethnic, cultural and educational backgrounds causes severe difficulties in the traditional ethnographic method of participant observation and of course in the contextualisation of the recorded narratives. This has led to several attempts to “typologise” or “operationalise” tourism, often through statistical categorisations. Most of them, however, tend to fail when dealing with the explanation of the tourist experience since the meaning found in it is based on external characteristics and somewhat superficial classifications. It is now evident that there are no clear-cut boundaries between the different types of tourists, not even between tourists and hosts (Abram et al. 1997, Boissevain 1996, Zarkia 1996). A multiplicity of motivations may characterise the same ethnic, age, or other group when visiting a place (Cohen 1984, Burns 1999). “The current anthropological thinking is that tourism has many motivations and is too complex to be thus categorised” writes Burns (1999: 88). The same tourists may have contradicting or apparently opposing quests during their visit or read the place differently each time they decide to visit it. As Selwyn has argued, “tourists seem to have a fundamental ambivalence which... may well be the principal characteristic of tourism in the post-modern world” (1996a: 6).

Similarly, in our “best-selling” Cretan monument, there is no such category as “the tourist of Knossos”. Country of origin, age, sex, length of stay, financial status and educational level, all seem to be of some importance, but none can serve as a sufficient and satisfactory explanatory scheme in the analysis of people’s voices. Assumptions based on this kind of information, even when verified, can only lead to the reproduction of stereotypes, as repeated by tour guides and other people employed in tourist activities. Consequently, what I attempted to do was to make evident the polyphony of views and opinions about the role of Knossos within the tourist experience of Crete and to relate it to broader issues regarding the meaning of the Minoan archaeological past in the present. In this framework, I have only generalised to the extent to which a narrative seemed to regard a specific public more than others (e.g. Greek/foreign tourist, people who have already been to the site once/newcomers, people with special interests in specific aspects of Minoan or modern Cretan culture, etc.).

My data and information derive mainly from the 32 tourists I interviewed. I approached them essentially at two locations: the coffee-shops of the Heraklion museum and inside the archaeological site of Knossos, respectively. During my first attempts, I gave them a questionnaire that I thought was pertinent to the major issues of the visit. It transpired that most interviews, after the first general and easy questions about the visitors’ impressions, were carried out without the mediation of the questionnaire, but rather as a free discussion which I encouraged for as long as my informants were available. Observations at the site also formed an important part in this investigation. These regarded people’s movements within the site, their responses to the visual stimuli of the place and to the information given by guides, their interest in taking pictures at specific points and of course the type of questions they asked guides, guards, or knowledgeable friends who were also participants in the visit. Finally, I exchanged many views with people whom I did not interview at length; this information is also used in the chapter to enhance what I gathered from the long and/or tape-recorded conversations.

I tried to have a representative sample. A basic criterion for approaching people was certainly my knowledge of their language. Thus I spoke with Italian, American, British, Australian and French visitors and of course with Greeks. I also interviewed

people from other places (Germany, China, Norway) who had command of and were willing to speak with me in English. These were primarily independent tourists, i.e., they were not members of a group, so they had enough time for a relaxed conversation. Many of them proved interested in the discussion and before its conclusion asked for information on their own behalf about the island or other tourist sights. Finally, my relationship with certain tour guides gave me the opportunity not only to attend their tours and take notes but also to talk with their groups at the end of a tourist's day in Heraklion, which was normally concluded at the museum. This was a chance for me to correlate the presentation of the site by specialists with the visitors' gaze at it.

The chapter is articulated in three parts and expands on themes touched in the previous sections of the thesis in regard to Evans's interpretation of Knossos, as well as its current visual and textual representations. The first part focuses on themes raised by tourists and are predicated in the operation of their gaze: a) their "archetypical" quests in experiencing Knossos, b) questions of taste as a result of aesthetic judgements and evaluations and c) the importance of the ancient myths, especially that of the labyrinth, in the perception of the site. The second part explores the tourists' cultural construction of Crete through their contact with the ancient remains, while the third part focuses on the very particularity of Knossos, i.e., the reconstructions and their role in visitors' discourses on authenticity.

## I. GAZING AT KNOSSOS

### - “Archetypical” quests

Knossos represents the material and immaterial qualities of a very old and very remarkable culture. It offers a paradigm of a chronologically and (also spatially for the foreign tourists) distant “Other” whose works are not only worth visiting but also noticing and admiring.

For those visitors who already know about the place, their visit is expected to verify the theory of the Minoans’ cultural and economic supremacy which ended with the eruption of the volcano in Santorini and/or the arrival of the warlike Mycenaeans and, basically, to confirm the views of Minoan Crete as an exceptionally peaceful and developed society, diffused in all sorts of books and presentations.

This is how Irini, a young toy-maker from Athens who remembers some relevant information from school, summarises her knowledge of Minoan Crete:

*...Minoan society was very flourishing and wealthy and women had a special position in it... It was a culture which loved life, a culture which loved people; it had man at its centre, in a word, it was anthropocentric; I am not very sure whether this is correct... On top of that, it was organised as a kingdom and, as far as I know, a terrible earthquake, which happened on the island of Santorini, destroyed the whole civilisation...*

During the interviews, many visitors comparatively juxtaposed past and present in social, cultural and aesthetic terms confirming Urry, who argues that the tourist gaze “is constructed through *difference* in relationship to its opposite, to non-tourist forms of social experience and consciousness” (1990:1-2). This attitude often leads to comments about the supposed superiority of Minoan culture when compared to our own way of life in general or in Crete in particular, and it is also based on the impressions created on visitors by the objects and structures displayed.

Irini comments:

*I got the impression of a fairytale-like palace: all these young figures [i.e. on the frescoes], the girls, their bodies, the purity of their faces, everything expresses a very positive attitude towards life...it's not like in the castles and the palaces of Northern Europe, where you see decorations with monsters and other similar things...*

*[and] that figurine, "the goddess of the snakes" who has the breasts uncovered, shows an extraordinary freedom in people's attitudes especially if we compare them to our society...we think that the naked body means an unacceptable freedom...and we identify the dressed body with conservatism, religion and severity...but when you see all these female figurines you think that the Minoans had different codes of morality, that they enjoyed more freedom...*

And after their visit to the museum of Heraklion, a pair of German journalists reproduced the information they got from their guide concerning the peaceful Minoans on the one hand, and the warlike character of the Mycenaean conquerors of Crete on the other, and based their view on the impression they drew from the pleasant scenes depicted on the Knossian frescoes:

*It must have been a lucky, peaceful and happy period. The figures in the frescoes are so lively; they smile, and they look happy. You don't see any weapons ... I think and feel that the Minoan society was very peaceful until people from Mycenae arrived here...*

MacCannell has argued (1992: 3) that a popular tourist site offers an appropriate ground for the location of people's "displaced thoughts", usually seen as caused by feelings of uncertainty, lack of social stability and narratives on movement. In effect, the accommodation of these thoughts at Knossos occurs in a safe and socially acceptable way, which, although puts nothing at risk, promises something new, interesting and hopefully impressive: the people who inhabited Knossos 4,000 years ago built an impressive palace; they also made fine objects, achieved high levels of

aesthetic and technological standards and showed great respect to the resources of their land; women enjoyed freedom from conventional morality; and, finally, the joy of life characterised their everyday practices.

In other words, the visit to Knossos is called on to meet the expectations of those tourists looking for the different (in relation to the familiar forms of the everyday) and the “authentic” in the remains of an ancient people whose island they are visiting. Authenticity here refers to the search for a sense of community and genuine social relations in the past (see Selwyn 1996a); it is a search for a society where people enjoyed the advantages of a remarkably well-organised political and cultural system “like in an extended family”, as an American female tourist described Minoan society.

Therefore, no other archaeological culture could better match such tourist quests and expectations than one with an aesthetics close to what we consider “*exquisite*”; with people “*who had enough leisure time*” (Peggy, American tourist); “*without fortifications and depictions of wars and clashes between people*” (Jane, American tourist); or put it differently, “*without fear of anyone*”, since, as Peggy said, “*constantly having to defend yourself, you cannot make objects of such incredible aspect!*” And Ian, Peggy’s friend, firmly confirmed this view adding that in civilisations with war affairs “*you don’t have the time or the money to spend on such [i.e. exquisite] objects*”.

MacCannell (1992) has suggested that the tourist quest for authenticity is but a search for meaning in life, a way of managing diversity, novelty and the cultural instability that modern life presents. In the case of Knossos, this meaning is sought in the remains of the admirable Minoan society. Its idealisation can go so far as to suggest that the Minoans can be thought of as rich not because of their financial wealth but because of their happy way of living, as Fanny, a secretary working in Athens, asserted:

*You know what? I don’t associate richness just with money, but mainly with people who are happy and open-minded. The frescoes make me feel that these people here danced and listened to music; it*

*seems to me that they enjoyed a carefree life. They were wealthy because they had nice food and wine, they had music, and they travelled.*

Happiness, open-mindedness, dances, music, nice food and wine, a carefree life; in other words, the Minoans had what we may be looking for during our escape from our own life context to another time and another place in which we invest our hopes for a different, authentically good time.

### **-Questions of taste**

Aesthetic pleasure is a dominant aspect of the tourist experience. The stylistic characteristics of both Minoan objects and architectural structures are associated with broader cultural principles which support and justify the visit to the Cretan antiquities. Tonia, a young teacher from Athens, referred to the beauty and simplicity that she noticed in the Knossian architecture (though “Knossian” refers to the reconstructed parts). For example in the plain forms of the Throne Room, she sees “an element of comfort and richness” but without what she calls “aesthetic exaggeration”, while two, old, Italian ladies told me after visiting the museum exhibition that “*ancient Cretan objects seem so beautiful that they make you think that all Crete was made by hand; not like today when everything is produced using machines*”. Minoan material culture stimulates an appreciation for plain, aesthetic forms and hand-made things, as well as an excitement for the small scale and detailed object, often pointed-out by tourists as being lost in the sensibilities of modern times.

The presence of various colours, especially of the red-russet, which Evans used on the restored parts, plays a dominant role in the creation of many people’s positive evaluations of the place. “*Depicting the world in the colours found on the frescoes means presenting it with affection and tenderness*”, a German tourist visiting Knossos with his young children told me. In fact, these colours have already “painted” many visitors’ images of “the palace” well before their visit and remain

imprinted on their memories of Crete, especially those people who have visited Knossos at an early age in their lives.

Moreover, the tendency to approach the Minoan past favourably is strong amongst those visitors who find stylistic affinities between Minoan objects and the modernist artistic movements of the twentieth century. In these cases, Minoan art is seen as being close to the aesthetic pursuits of our times. Irini found the “throne’s” design “*similar [to] a piece of furniture one can find in a sophisticated shop in Paris that sells Art Nouveau objects*”. Furthermore, Minoan architecture is deemed as “unexpectedly modern” in terms of sensibility, of grand and open spaces where there is a lot of light. The shape and colouration of the columns also seem very modern to some visitors who consider the classical style very serious, sober and somewhat distant or even “old-fashioned”. The plainness of classical art, and particularly of the Athenian Acropolis, is contrasted – basically by foreign tourists – with the playfulness of Minoan material culture and the palace at Knossos, in a way similar to the observations made by Henry Miller (see chapter 1) or even by Evans when, in the first decades of the century, he presented Minoan art as an expression of the joy for life.

Mathieu, a naval engineer from France, mentions that he enjoyed the Minoan objects more than the exhibits at the National Museum of Athens, i.e., the largest collection of Greek classical art, that he had visited before his trip to Crete. For him and other European tourists, the visit to the Heraklion museum was felt as a welcome novelty, a sort of liberation from the Neoclassical style with which he is very familiar because of its imprint on many Parisian buildings:

*There are some very obvious differences between the two styles [i.e. classical and Minoan]. I think that classical culture was a bit snobbish... Here you see this red all around! Minoan culture is far more interesting; it is closer to the primitive, and it's more spontaneous. The classical period was a bit stiff; when it became universal it lost its originality, its sophistication...*



For Greek visitors, aesthetic distinctions between classical and Minoan heritage are much more varied and complex. Some of them talk about the “serious” classical style and the “joyful” Minoan, as noted above by Mathieu. Margarita, a Greek educator from Athens in her early thirties, associated the classical style with “rationalism” and the Minoan to a “feeling of fascination”. *“To me, classical Greece brings to mind the West and Western civilisation whereas Minoan Crete, the East”* she says, unconsciously making an association that is strongly reminiscent of Evans’s similar metaphors of East and West in the descriptions of his “Europeanised” Minoans, notwithstanding he approached the East with feelings of contempt rather than with fascination.

On the other hand, there are many Greek visitors who express their attachment to classical heritage and the Acropolis in particular, because of its symbolic connotations and explain their decision to visit Knossos as *“the curiosity to get closer to a past culture [and] see its palaces...”* as a medical doctor from Athens stated. The same visitor found the Minoan aesthetics *“not very Greek, [but] closer to Egypt... [and causing] a sort of ‘orientalising’ feeling”*.

The apparent differences between Minoan and classical monuments are sometimes emphasised by Greek tourists in order to connote the differences between Crete and the rest of Greece. Tonia, the teacher from Athens quoted above who praised the aesthetics of Minoan architecture, linked the difference between Minoan and classical aesthetics to those she found between Crete and the rest of Greece:

*Of course, the Minoan civilisation is part of our history, [that is] of a Cretan history which became Greek history... but it is closer to Crete than to the rest of Greece...Cretans differentiate themselves from the other Greeks; and Knossos is a very basic part of this image...*

Therefore, the general cultural distinctiveness of the island can be seen as rooted in a very old tradition of differences which go back to Minoan times and the basic monument of that famous period. The uniqueness of Minoan material culture is coupled with and silently interpreted through that of the island itself in past and present times.

Nevertheless, all landscapes of ruins of the country, classical and pre-classical, are connected to each other as part and parcel of the creation of the Greek “imagined community” and the Minoan monuments could make no exception to this rule merely on the basis of their stylistic differences from classical monuments. Thus, in most Greek visitors’ narratives, Minoan distinctiveness is abstracted as much as possible in order to be related to all other Greek monuments that objectify national identity. Knossos then becomes every Greek’s unquestioned heritage, which differentiates Greek people from other nations.

The above mentioned medical doctor, for instance, feels sorry that Greeks do not take care of their distinct heritage:

*I think that we have to try harder to keep Knossos and all these places; other people, before you, struggled to save them, so that now we can enjoy this heritage... It's the same when a foreigner invades your country: you have to fight and defend it, like your grandfathers and your great-grandfathers did before you. Think that in other countries with less than a 300-year-old history, there are wonderful museums with actually insignificant exhibits... The English, for example, have kept what they call “the table of King Arthur!”...What are we doing here about all these things that are 4,000 years old?*

It is obvious that even without the feelings of awe engendered in many Greeks when encountering the Acropolis, Knossos by virtue of its age as well as its location in Greek territory, indeed one defended to death by the modern inhabitants’ grandparents, becomes an ancestral monument standing first in the sequence of the ancient miracles. Altogether this heritage is what makes Greece distinct amongst the advanced but “recently appeared” peoples of the West and the differences from one monument to the other become almost insignificant details.

### **- The influence of the ancient myths**

*As a social category “the extraordinary place” spontaneously invites speculation, reverie, mind-voyaging and a variety of other acts of imagination.*

Rojek 1997: 52

If one considers that tourism is very much about the search of myths outside the (apparently) well-defined spatial locales of everyday lives, a mythological element always seems to be of some significance in the social construction of a tourist attraction. An archaeological monument dated in the third and second millennium BC is by its very nature embedded in fantasies, as it was when it stimulated Evans's and other archaeologists' imaginations, without which archaeological interpretation would have been impossible. Knossos however, is a place categorically identified with the ancient myths, hence the enquiry about the borders between myth and archaeological information about the Bronze Age became an important one in the exploration of the tourist visit.

Nevertheless, talking with tourists about the effect of the ancient myths on their expectations and perceptions of the site was a delicate and slightly puzzling process. Yet, at least it revealed the inextricable interrelation between myth and history, in contrast to traditional Western attitudes, both academic and popular), which tend to separate the two and consider the latter as an objective truth and the former as mere fantasy (Tonkin 1990).

The ancient myths are known to tourists to a varying degree. Representations of King Minos, Ariadne, the Minotaur and the Labyrinth have played a significant role not only in the Greek but also in the Western imagination, with the themes drawn from Cretan mythology having occupied a great deal of the European artistic and broadly cultural production since the Early Renaissance. This has an indirect, though considerable, impact on several things we deem to date as self-evident: the concept of the maze, the word “Europe” and its etymological genesis, the familiarity and fascination with the Minotaur, etc. What Rojek calls “processes of indexing and dragging in the social construction of a tourist sight” (1997: 52) includes, in the case

of Knossos, a variety of influential cultural elements associated with these famous myths.<sup>4</sup>

The vast majority of visitors know the myths before they arrive in Crete. This knowledge stimulates their wish to visit the site. Yet, as soon as they pass its gate, they argue that they tend to forget about its mythological connections; they stop thinking of them altogether, since there is no actual reference to the myth inside the grounds or in the museum. Most maintain that what is actually important is to see the palace, the way people actually lived in the past, the objects they made and used, etc.

Rita, an Italian book translator living in Paris, answers my relevant questions as follows:

*No, the myth was not important. What I wanted to see here were the objects; to understand their use, to see how people lived, cooked, how they washed themselves...If their king was named Minos is of little importance to me; my interest is more sociological, I would say...*

But myth and material remains in Knossos are inseparable. This becomes obvious when people expect to see representations of the Minotaur, they refer to Minos as a real historical figure (e.g. *"my main purpose is to visit the palace of Minos"*) or when, influenced by the myth of the Minoan domination over the seas, they expect Knossos to be on the coast. Greek visitors seem to correlate the myth and the archaeological site more than the visitors coming from abroad. This is also evident in the Greeks' wish to visit a site that brings back memories from their school days,

---

<sup>4</sup> A large number of European painters, playwrights, musicians, and poets have used Cretan mythological themes, with which many visitors are familiar, in their works. Some of these themes, e.g., the figure of the Minotaur, emblematised modernist movements of the twentieth century, the French branch of surrealism and a long period in the work of Picasso (Loizidi 1988). The Labyrinth, on the other hand, has functioned as a powerful metaphor for the relationship of man to space, perspectives, itineraries, and horizons (Ceccarelli 1995: 46). It is also understood as synonymous with complicated structures (architectural or other), troubles, and the playful or difficult search for an exit or an end. It is an active metaphor in pedagogy (ibid.), in psychoanalysis, and in studies of networks, communication systems, and particular types of movement, such as in dances (Hourdakis 1995).

when mythology and historical information about the Minoan period are taught. A Greek female tourist explained that she had first decided to visit Knossos

*...because it is so closely related to the myth of Ariadne and the Minotaur...it's like a visit to the place where all these figures used to live... I wanted to see the myth inscribed on the ground, in a way, to find the labyrinth amongst the ruins...When I was a child I looked for the labyrinth here in Knossos...*

Moreover, despite the expressed (by many tourists) limited importance of the myth, there is little doubt that the notion of the labyrinth in particular also has profound (and sometimes unconscious) effects on their narratives. Thus, a great number of foreign people expect to see a maze in the form of a building. They frequently ask the guides questions about its precise location within the archaeological site. The realisation that the labyrinth belongs to the myth and has only indirect, metaphorical or etymological connections to the palace often embarrasses the tour guides, who have to deal with the groups' disappointment. As a young American tourist said: *"I thought that there would be more traps at the palace [and] that Knossos would be much more playful"*. In a way, the visit to the site re-enacts the myth which is known and familiar to many visitors. Like other "shrines of the past", the remains of Knossos become the primordial material for remembering a past (cf. Lovell 1998: 15-16), which, albeit mythological, acquires tangible evidence within the boundaries of the site.

## **II. KNOSSOS AS OBJECTIFICATION OF CRETE**

*Minoan society, as it looks in the frescoes, was peaceful and quiet. In them, people dance and drink wine. I have the feeling that people in Crete also enjoy life, especially in the villages: not in the big cities like Heraklion, but in small places and villages they look happy and relaxed; they like dancing and drinking wine; their lives are not hectic as those in other parts of Europe.*

A pair of journalists from Germany

*As place is sensed, senses are placed; as places make sense, senses make place.*

Feld 1996, cited in Casey 1996: 19

For many tourists, Knossos does not simply represent the materiality of ancient Cretan history but the general location of a continuous, uninterrupted, Cretan culture (cf. Bhabha 1994). The links between the past and present of Crete, already stressed by guides, brochures and tourist imagery, are enhanced through common features in modern and (what is seen as) the Minoan landscapes of Crete.

Many visitors understand the island through its past and vice versa. Some build upon the similarities they notice, especially those deemed as traditional or pre-modern (specific dietary habits, agricultural practices, “unspoilt landscapes”, etc.) in order to construct the locale of their holiday. Experiencing Knossos and feeling the place give value to the overall travel to the island. For Tonia, for example, the teacher from Athens, her wish to go to Knossos (after travelling several times to other places on the island) means

*... putting a pebble in the mosaic of Crete but a mosaic that I want to make myself through my own experiences and all the knowledge I gradually gain about the island...Because very special things are*

*going on here...and they all belong to the Cretans: their products, their food, their dialect, their clothes... their villages, most of which are still intact unlike in the rest of Greece...and the Cretans themselves, as far as I know, are so proud of their land.*

The particularity of Crete and its people as well as of its special culture and products finds its counterpart in the particularity of this unusual ancient site. Furthermore, the conspicuous emphasis of Minoan art on naturalistic themes also seems to mediate between a visit to the site and a visit to the rest of Crete. Typical Cretan vegetation, vineyards and trees that extend to the neighbouring slopes, surround the site itself. The assertion that crops such as olives and grapes were cultivated in Minoan times reinforces these links and confirms the features, the importance and the wealth of the Cretan land and its inhabitants' way of life.

The visual has an undoubted primacy in most processes of learning about the Minoan past. Yet apart from it, other senses are also intertwined in the visit to Knossos (cf. Rojek and Urry 1997: 5-10). In many different ways, involvement of the senses enhances or makes more difficult the understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of Knossos accordingly. More interestingly, many tourists combine the visit to Knossos with the rest of their holiday. They sense it as an equally pleasant activity, like sun bathing and swimming and sometimes they connect their experiences to the Cretan myths, the colours of the Minoan decorations, etc., the depicted themes such as the dolphins which are still seen in the Aegean, even the religiosity of the Minoans was related to the endless chapels seen in the Cretan landscape, "a sensitivity lost in other countries such as the States" as an American female tourist noted.

Peter, a 50-year-old American and a first-time visitor to Greece, connects the impressions from his stay in Crete to one and the same feeling as follows:

*It's my first time in Greece and the first in this part of Europe... I have read of Knossos but I knew nothing other than that the Minoan civilisation was a very early civilisation ... I came very empty and I was very surprised and delighted with the island of Crete. We went*

*swimming in wonderful, warm water yesterday and I enjoyed the countryside all the way across... and today we came to see Knossos... the sea seems to be so important for the Greeks...*

(emphasis added)

And a young, Chinese, female visitor living in Brazil correlated the “Minoan colours” with her impressions of the basic features she noticed in the Greek landscape:

*The colours of the Minoan objects are very vivid and lively, in a word, you can see these colours, blue, white, red all around: in the sea, the white houses, the marble columns, in the clothes people wear; this is a sense of colour that you can feel everywhere. The blue of the Blue Ladies is also on your flag; the sea seems to be reflected in it.*

The senses are also important when the visit to Knossos continues at places which, in one way or another, have an indirect connection or make a reference to the Minoan period. These include agricultural cooperatives in the region of Heraklion, wine-tasting centres and similar places where local products are made, sampled and sold. As has been mentioned, the marketing of these products is largely based on images taken from the archaeological heritage of Crete, mainly the areas around Knossos. Smelling herbs, tasting good quality honey and olive oil and drinking wine are all activities related to the Minoan economy and extend the visit outside the ancient site through the use of other senses, especially those of smell and taste. Eco-tourism, which has impressively developed on the island in the last years, relies heavily on such “synaesthetic” experiences that produce links between the past and the present, whereas a comparable tourist interest regarding the use of some precious Cretan herbs for medical and cosmetic purposes is developing on the island.

If we accept Rojek’s and Urry’s affirmation that “one does not simply see more of the world by engaging in these [i.e. cultural] forms of tourist activities, one also accepts the invitation to become a better person” (1997: 4), then the use of all senses during and after the visit to Knossos can be understood as an effort to benefit from



an age-long tradition in order to improve our health, appearance and respect for the earth's resources. In this way, tourism becomes a more integrated set of practices, concerned with not only the fixed period of the tourist stay but also our everyday practices when at home.

Home and abroad, past and present gradually become less distinct categories of life, at least in the Western world. The increasing "culturisation" of the Cretan tourist experience is best described by Clifford when he talks about the gradually more indistinguishable conditions of "travelling-in-dwelling and dwelling-in-travelling" (1992). This international tendency in global movements also characterises the tourist visit which starts at Knossos and then continues to places where age-old goods are still produced. This improves someone's lifestyle and stresses the need for a change for the better during and, of course, after the conclusion of the Cretan experience.

### **III. AUTHENTICITY “IN DANGER”:** **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RESTORATION WORK AT KNOSSOS**

#### **-A “staged event”, a “simulacrum”, or a “fascinating tourist sight”?**

As a metaphor that effects the retrieval of whole architectural structures of an ancient palace, Evans’s restoration work is remarkably effective. It exercises an immense influence on people’s perceptions of Minoan Crete; actually, most evaluations and views of Minoan material culture referred to so far are based on or inspired by the restored parts of Knossos, both architectural sections and frescoes.

Nonetheless, for a vast number of tourists, the reconstructions are not immediately recognisable as such. Indeed, many express their appreciation of the supposed good conditions in which Knossos has remained throughout time, while others feel disappointed for exactly the same reason: they think that too little, i.e., the restored parts which they believe as original, has survived from this highly publicised site.

The realisation that the most impressive parts of the complex are not original and that they were not unearthed as they are seen to date, causes surprise and generates several questions concerning the originality – or lack of such – of many structures, objects and frescoes. The tourists’ attitudes are reflected in the evident, almost instinctive, decision of some not to “waste” their pictures by photographing “copies”, or to take pictures only of the parts “safely” indicated as original by the tour leaders.<sup>5</sup>

The first fresco to be seen at Knossos, the so-called “cup-bearer”, is the initial site where this unexpected feeling of surprise occurs, especially at the moment when visitors ask if pictures taken with flash are allowed (see Fig. 11). They are then informed that no harm can be caused; this is a copy and the original pieces are in the museum in Heraklion. The surprise continues when people realise that the painted

---

<sup>5</sup> Several times I saw visitors taking pictures of single stone blocks, mainly at the staircase, according to their identification by the guides.

columns are not only totally reconstructed but also that the original ones were not made of stone (as is implied by the use of concrete) but of wood.

For the people joining guided tours, the appreciation of the remains is largely dependent on their guides' positive or negative answers to questions concerning the originality of walls, rooms and paintings.<sup>6</sup> When standing in front of the famous "Prince of the Lilies" fresco, an American visitor (who already knows that all original frescoes are in the museum) notes the presence of blossoms (open and closed lilies) in the background of the image (see Fig. 12). He then asks the guide whether their presence is related to fertility since the Minoans were so interested in relevant issues. The guide feels the need to tell him that there was no evidence of the presence of lilies in the background of the fresco; it was an idea of Evans or his assistant Gilliéron (i.e., the artist who did the restoration) to add this detail on the (copy of the restored) fresco. The group is disappointed and the visitor tells me *"instead of anthropology of tourism you need to do anthropology of archaeological thought!"*

However, during my fieldwork it became clear that it is very difficult to generalise about the degree of acceptance of Evans's solutions. Among those who do realise the existence of the reconstructions, many are not disturbed by their presence and are overtly positive towards Evans's initiatives: they stress the scholar's contribution when they are aware of it and generally enjoy the fact that they can get an idea about the original form and colouration of the palace. Others compare it to the poverty of the image offered by other Minoan palaces and consider the restorations as "fuel for their imagination": *"Because of the reconstruction you can walk into that, like into a slice of history, right, and then your imagination can be carried away and you can pretend that you are the goddess or you can pretend you are the king sitting on the chair [i.e., the throne],"* asserted Ian, the American student visiting the site and the museum of Heraklion (see above).

On the other hand, visitors who arrive at the site already informed about the existing controversies concerning Evans's work tend to be very critical. The realisation that

---

<sup>6</sup> Especially in the most evocative parts, i.e. the colonnades, the gates, the Throne Room, the Queen's Bath, the Grand Staircase, the Prince of the Lilies fresco and the storerooms.

the excavator possibly overstretched his interpretations of the finds and added architectural and pictorial elements in places where there was not enough evidence to support them, causes strong ambivalence, which in some cases can even cancel the validity of the whole experience of the site.

Fanny, the secretary from Athens, the same who idealised the Minoans on the basis of their art, compares the restored parts of Knossos to a palace built on purpose on a Hollywood set for a film on Minoan Crete. She adds that perhaps Evans was not interested in the “authentic appearance” of the restored parts since some of them do not have the “patina of the old”. Other visitors make associations with theme parks, fantasylands and “Disney World”, a common reference to post-modern (or even “post-tourist”, see Ritzer and Liska 1997) practices, made worldwide by tourists and theorists alike.

Authenticity is an important parameter in the appreciation and positive evaluation of a heritage site and in Knossos, the authoritative character of specialist knowledge seems at risk. Evans and the Greek state in general lose a great deal of their authority when incompetence and inaccuracy are discovered or thought to have been discovered by the “intellectual” visitor or simply the seeker of objective and safe statements about the past. National monuments should be protected from “audacious” interventions, says Efsevia, a literature teacher from Athens who metaphorically links the ancient remains to a human body; both deserve and call for careful “treatment”:

*I was very astonished...I kept asking the guide about the original columns...and she told me that originally they were made out of wood! This material here [i.e. the concrete] and this colour give such a different impression... Oh, all this ease with which he [i.e. Evans] reconstructed everything... I think that one should be very careful when he reconstructs something about which he does not have clear ideas; he should be careful just like a surgeon during a heart operation! Otherwise he **constructs** an image instead of preserving one. (Her emphasis)*

The recurring theme in similar discussions is that the visit to Knossos is a “staged event”. The lack of authenticity minimises the monument’s impact and spoils its meaning.

Margarita, the educator from Athens, compares the Knossian restorations with a recent tendency in Greece, especially in the large cities, to decorate shops in a traditional-looking style and imitate a quaint and supposedly old-fashioned “Greek style”:

*Knossos reminded me of these pretentious coffee and ouzo-drinking places in Athens. People think they are nice but in reality they provoke no emotion at all. In theory, yes they are all very well-made but to me they seem like an exaggerated make-up ... In other places [i.e. archaeological sites] you see only humble stones and these do have the power to touch you...*

The imitation, she continues, happens in vain. These places are not “really traditional”, they are something different, because, like Knossos, they copy the original, and therefore they have no “genuine” relationship to what they are trying to be like. This lack of a genuine aspect is also what makes the visit to Knossos less touching for those visitors who find the remains of Knossos as “inaccurate”. Irini explains her feelings in front of what she thinks as a “fake” image:

*Irini: I think that this [i.e. the uncertainty about the reliability of the restoration] ...diminished my admiration for this place, the emotion that I could feel. Because why do we come to this place? To get an image about what went on here thousands of years ago! There were people living here, they created things, they had an organised life...and this is what I was looking for...to find this human element, to discover the traces of their lives; maybe I approach it too sentimentally, but I come here and I am not sure about what I am looking at: to what extent were things really as I see them today and to what extent do I see the archaeologist’s imagination?*

*Esther: Is it an issue of authenticity?*

*Irini: For me, yes, it is! The authentic is what was unearthed and this has an ethical dimension. I don't mean by that that whatever is authentic is also nice and beautiful, but it is what really existed here, not something created through the mind's eyes of someone who has intervened so much...*

It fact the visitors who feel frustrated from Evans's interventions realise that the deeply established image of restored Knossos encountered in school-books and in all sorts of images of the island are reproductions of (inaccurate) copies of non-existent archaeological evidence. Baudrillard's conception of simulacrum is particularly pertinent to such criticisms that differentiate "scientific" representations of the site (which may well involve a "safe" restoration) from a utopian and arbitrary simulation of the past such as Knossos. In relation to the above notions, Baudrillard has argued that, "whereas representation attempts to absorb simulation by interpreting it as a false representation, simulation envelops the whole edifice of representation itself as a simulacrum" (1988: 6). And the image of restored Knossos for the above visitors is a "copy without an original" (ibid.): it no longer constitutes the signifier of the Minoan past but essentially a simulation of it that negates the very value of the monument..

Interestingly, visitors' views often appeared to be in contrast within the context of one interview. Efsevia, the literature teacher quoted above and her husband Giorgis, mathematician, were aware that some of the existing forms of the palace were not safely confirmed and that what they saw was a melange of original archaeological parts and modern material. The discussion with them, after completing their visit to the site, provided me with an eloquent verbalisation of the opposing views tourists may have when they realise in practice the intervention on the monument:

*Giorgis: ... OK, perhaps the columns were not red [i.e. in the past], but this colour makes the place look so nice, it left me with a very nice impression... I think that it made it more attractive to me since I know so little about antiquities.*

Efsevia: *Not to me though. ...I am not against all restorations, but against this particular one here. I am afraid that the impression I got about the Minoans was false...*

Giorgis: *But what would you go to see in a barren place without any restoration? What would you see? Just the foundations of the foundations!*

Efsevia: *Yes, but at least I would be sure that these were the foundations of the foundations that really existed at some point in the past! ...It's a matter of seriousness. What I want to see is a faithful image as close as possible to the reality of one time and not a kitsch image of an object that never existed. Building columns and painting them red, if we are not sure whether they were really red, it's a propaganda, a mere vulgarity, an intervention on something that you don't have the right to change. Knossos is not like the old house that we inherited from our grandfather and which we can modify as we like because it's our history. Knossos is everybody's history!*

Whereas Efsevia's opinion places most emphasis on the value of the *real* and the *genuine* – ancient remains of a monument that belongs to everybody like a shared heirloom, Giorgis's conscious acceptance of a possibly false image forces us to confront the way people negotiate the boundaries between the “sacred” and the “vulgar”, the authentic and the inauthentic, the objective and the purposely distorted historical truth.

The opposition between the two attitudes allows us to understand both the “differentiation” and the “de-differentiation” (see Lash 1990, Lash and Urry 1994) occurring between history and heritage (cf. Urry 1990), “pilgrims” and tourists (Bauman 1996) or even between “high” and “popular” culture. In fact, the narratives on the authentic or inauthentic character of the monument can not be separated. The visual and perceptual power of the reconstructions, both inside and outside the site, is such that even the strongest supporters of a much-sought authenticity would not be able or willing to accept Knossos without them. Perhaps

not unrelated to the visual power of Evans's work, the overwhelming majority of pictures taken by the tourists at the site are of the rebuilt parts and the most popular items sold in the museum shop are the two graphic reconstructions of the palace, visible at its entrance (Fig. 52, 53, 54).

To my question posed to five visitors amongst those who most fervently criticised the restorations, none replied that he would prefer Knossos as it was unearthed. All admitted that they *could not* imagine Knossos without its columns and the overwhelming presence of this particular red colour, the "Knossian red". Indeed Irini, who so staunchly supported the value of authenticity, compared such a hypothetically "cleared" Knossos to the city of Paris without its Eiffel tower – you can't imagine one without the other, even if you do not like it. Again, Knossos as a sign that simulates the principle of reality, "threatens the difference between the 'true' and the 'false', the 'real' and the 'imaginary'" (Baudrillard 1988: 3) but this time this threat is accepted as a necessary evil.

From this point of view, the "reproducibility" of the emblematic features of Minoan art and architecture, the recent decision of the Greek government to protect and keep for posterity the now collapsing reconstructed parts, the acceptance of the most inaccurate reconstructions as necessary, the popularity of the graphic reconstructions bought extensively by tourists, and even the views of those tourists who openly support the need for further reconstruction work at the site in order to make it look even more impressive lead us to some tentative assumptions about the *scapes* of tourist practices concerning Knossos; these can only be understood within the cultural formulations of post-modernity, where the real and the false, the medium and the message, the authentic and the inauthentic, although still important in many tourists' narratives, slowly but gradually merge into each other.

#### **- The social connotations of reinforced concrete: The presence of a "polluting" element inside the archaeological site**

Generally, most criticisms by visitors about the reconstructions at Knossos regard their modern-looking aspect and the materials used (especially, the concrete) rather



than the initiative itself to restore the monument. These criticisms are mainly expressed by those who declare themselves more sensitive to and passionate about the true spirit of past remains; also by those already informed and willing to verify the inadequacy of the restoration; and, not least, by those looking for the “authentic face” of Cretan culture, both past and present.

The use of concrete, perceived as aesthetically unpleasant, can be understood as related to the disconcerting conditions of modernity and, for the Greek visitors, to the cultural priorities set within the Greek national sphere. It is these priorities that are often blamed for the denigrated landscape of the Heraklion area, the presence of “vulgar” buildings next to the site and the general indifference of the Greeks to learning something from the aesthetic attainments of past generations. Irini explains:

*All this cement here is a bit vulgar... I think that it has to do with how disgusting we think this material is. Perhaps in Athens I wouldn't have been so disturbed but here in Crete... We came here to spend our holidays, to get away from it all... We go to the beach and even there we see these horrible buildings and then we come here, and just outside the gate of Knossos you see these horrible kiosks again. At this point I felt fed up; enough was enough! And I say that because I live in Athens; my life is immersed in images of reinforced concrete... The concrete is part of a life that does not fulfil us and when we go on holiday, we want to see nicer things, much more beautiful, to travel in the past as well. All this cement spoils everything, spoils the whole thing, and inside Knossos it looks horrible...*

Similarly, for Efsevia the displeasure she felt in front of the “miserable and aged” concrete of Knossos contradicted the site’s sacredness and cancelled the memories she had kept from her childhood, when she had visited and enjoyed the colourful relics of a palace:

*Because as a child you don't pay any attention to the reinforced concrete, it doesn't mean anything to you! But now! It saddened me so much; it destroyed my illusions...I think that all these restored parts*

*look like unfinished construction sites of the 1970s... They are so ugly; it's almost like a sacrilege... They remind me of the horrible building I lived in with my family in Athens.*

*But Knossos is sacred, just like all these heritage sites; they have the sacredness of the life that has passed through them... The cement is so solid, so cold; it's a material used by people who are interested only in making money... It is suffocating; and your eyes cannot relax...*

*Whether I like a heritage site or not, I consider its original form as sacred and I don't like seeing the ruins of Knossos treated in this way... they smell of "industrialisation". The cement is foreign to their history... Some parts at Knossos look like an unauthorised construction ("aftereto") built quickly in one night, just like the unauthorised buildings you see all around Greece: they are made without love for the residents, without attention and seriousness...*

Efsevia's and Irini's explanations of the reasons they felt thus disappointed when confronted with the reinforced concrete they saw at Knossos make us think of the tourist sight as a "counter-image" or even a "counter-experience" located by the tourist on the opposite side of a unsatisfactory, everyday present. The restorations that "smell of industrialisation" and remind one of unauthorised buildings of the 1970s connote the dissatisfaction caused by a practically ineffective social system with no interest in aesthetics, which, at least in the large Greek cities, is blamed for their chaotic and repulsive image. Also, the cold, grey buildings made of concrete are thought of as contributing to the far-reaching individualism typical of the urban model of life. Not irrelevantly, as we shall see in the next chapter, the Greek Archaeological Service makes considerable effort to obstruct unauthorised constructions in the area that have transformed modern Knossos into a suburb of Heraklion.

Since concrete, the material most negatively criticised in Greek cities, is used at Knossos, the sacredness of the ancient monument is definitely affected. The purity of the supposedly original aspect of the ruins is irreversibly "polluted" (cf. Douglas 1966), as is the case with the concrete buildings of modern Knossos which the Greek

Archaeological Service has tried to place under its “aesthetic control” (see below chapter 5).

It becomes obvious that through their comments on restored Knossos, Efsevia, Irini and many other critical visitors have expressed not only their preoccupation with the aesthetically unpleasant conditions of urban modernity as they experience it at home but also the need for essential human values. These are values usually identified with traditional societies “located” in remote villages and rural areas which are expected to be intact, beautiful and rewarding; and despite its position in attracting enormous numbers of tourists, Crete is the “traditional destination” par excellence. Contrary to expectations, the visit to Knossos fails to counteract the lack of “traditionality” that visitors have to face immediately upon their arrival at Heraklion, i.e., the city with the highest rate of unauthorised buildings in the country.

By relating the ugliness of the restored parts to modern constructions, which are seen as spoiling the landscape, these visitors also invite us to think about the meaning of what they call “traditional”, when they decide to visit Crete. Finding signs of an unsatisfactory urban landscape everywhere on the island, and especially at Knossos, its main tourist site, diminishes the validity of the diffused claim about the importance of Crete as a place famous for its traditional values. Therefore, in these cases, the “archetypal structural analysis” based on the binary oppositions between past and present, home and holiday, tradition and social alienation cannot be verified, at least not through the visit to Crete’s famous monument.

## CONCLUSIONS

Knossos is not a neutral backdrop simply for the location of a largely appreciated ancient monument, the object of the gaze of numerous visitors who only feel “obliged” to be there. By virtue of Evans’s interpretation work and in conjunction, of course, with the age and the stylistic qualities of Minoan material culture, Knossos is easily idealised within the tourist construction of local culture. Its remains are often called upon to meet the need for a pre-modern but technologically developed people that lived a long time ago in harmony with both their fellows and their environment. For the “archetypical tourist” (MacCannell 1976, 1992), Minoan Crete offers a cognitive base for a close contact with “a more whole, structured and authentic Other” (Selwyn 1996a: 2).

Not accidentally, the features of Bronze Age Crete are sought and sometimes found by some of the “semiotician” visitors (cf. Eco 1986) in modern Crete as well. Through an implicit link between Minoan objects and aspects of modern Cretan culture (e.g., the local dietary habits, rural landscapes, the frequent use of some colours, etc.), the remains of Knossos serve as a lens for experiencing and appreciating the whole place, in an apparently timeless dimension. The monument becomes an active *aide* for visitors’ conceptualisation of Crete across time, a sort of “topical metaphor” (Hastrup and Olwig 1997: 13) for the travel to this particular place of the world.

Thus the visit to Knossos has to be understood as part of a significant whole, which includes not only the historical knowledge acquired during the visit, and the enjoyment felt gazing upon beautiful objects but also efforts to achieve a better quality of life both on holiday and when at home. This is a major aspect of the gradually increasing “culturisation” of the Cretan tourist experience and connects the visit to Knossos to the acquaintance with the “age-long traditions” of the island. This attitude often involves the tourists’ use of other senses apart from that of sight. Tasting and smelling not only make knowledge of the place and its past stronger

and more interesting but also allow the impressions and ideas about this place to follow special routes, connecting home and away, here and there.

Aesthetic pleasure is a crucial aspect of the tourist experience. The stylistic characteristics of Minoan objects and architectural structures are associated with cultural principles which support and justify the visit to the Cretan antiquities. Visitors make their interest in aesthetic ideals obvious; but unlike Bauman's assertion that "what the tourist buys, what he pays for, what he demands to be delivered (or goes to court if delivery is delayed) is ... freedom from any but aesthetic spacing" (1996: 30), tourists to Knossos associate their aesthetic judgements with their need for broader values. These include the feeling of balance between beauty and simplicity, the lack of aesthetic exaggeration, the joy experienced gazing at the intense colours and the appreciation for handmade things such as the ones displayed in the museum. The visit to Knossos and the museum reveals the tourist need for joyful aesthetic forms. The unexpected "modernity" of Minoan aesthetics is deemed, mainly by foreign visitors, a spirit relevant to modern tastes, and occasionally it is compared to the sober Classical and Neoclassical styles.

Authenticity is a major tourist quest (though not for all visitors), which at Knossos seems at stake because of Evans's reconstructions. It has to do with the visit to the site in both meanings of the concept as proposed by Selwyn (1996a: 7-9): a) with regard to the knowledge a tourist gains about a culture (e.g., how authentic and accurate is the knowledge offered to tourists by specialists) and b) with regard to feelings and social relations sought and developed during the tourist experience.

In its first sense, authenticity is contested due to the perceived "inaccuracy" of the restorations. This diminishes the validity of Knossos as an "authentic" and "scientifically interpreted" place and allows for associations with heritage simulacra that challenge the presentation of Knossos as an important tourist sight.

However, it is mainly in its second sense that authenticity influences people's experience of the monument. The presence of concrete, considered by many tourists a modern and anti-aesthetic material, puts many values embedded in the tourist visit at risk. The traditionalism of Crete is at stake when its most important monument

does not follow the rules of a supposedly human and aesthetically pleasing architecture while reproducing features of an unpleasant urban landscape from which, as tourists, we often need to escape. Not least, the sacred character of the ancient Greek ruins on which Greece has based its special identity is unacceptably affected. The need for re-formulation of social structures (seen as “demolished” by modernity) during their visit to *other* places, as MacCannell describes people’s motivation for travelling (1976, 1992), is particularly relevant in the expression of many visitors’ disappointment in the fact of the reinforced concrete of the Knossian monument.

Paradoxically, these literal “structures of modernity” of Knossos not only are not demolished but every effort has been made in order to preserve them. This paradox, as this chapter has intended to show, is not irrelevant to the acceptance of these structures by all parties involved, even by their most fervent critics including the Archaeological Service itself. How could this place have attracted people’s interest without the reconstructions? How could it have competed with much more impressive ancient buildings located elsewhere, e.g., in Athens, in the Peloponnese or abroad? The fact that these ruins are thousands of years old is of little importance if they do not stimulate immediate attention. Thus, those who decide on the future of these prestigious relics are obliged to “alter history” in favour of heritage, as Lowenthal has put it in relation to the “heritage crusade” of our times (1998). In fact, those responsible for the interpretation and protection of the ruins are required to negotiate or even “diminish” the level of the ruins’ authenticity precisely on behalf of the “authentic” feelings people seek when they visit a site of the past. The two senses of the concept appear to contradict each other just as the ambivalent attitudes of those visitors who although condemning the reconstructions, do not prefer Knossos without them.

As pilgrims, mass consumers, “archetypical structuralists, or simply curious drifters, tourists at Knossos mix a variety of ambivalent elements and identity issues when they do something so easily comprehensible and obviously expected as to visit the main historical site of their holiday destination. Their preoccupation with pursuits such as “pre-modern” traditions, meaningful social values or simply the need to escape coexists with the more straightforward quest to move, to be impressed by a

local sight and to visit an imposing monument, even if its official interpretation pretends or “simulates” the past, like the “copies without an original” with which Baudrillard (1988) has associated the post-modern world; Selwyn might be right when he writes that “we live in a world which is *at the same time* pre-modern, modern and post-modern” (1996a: 18).

## *Chapter 4*

### **KNOWLEDGE PUT TO USE:** **MINOAN ANTIQUITIES IN CULTURAL TOPOGRAPHIES** **OF CRETE**

*Places are complex constructions of social histories, personal and interpersonal experiences, and selective memory.*

Kahn 1996: 167

Belonging to a particular place often means locating ourselves in its history. An individual or collective sense of place may originate in, be enacted or justified by the *past* and its memories; defined by the *present* through actual experience; and, finally, extended into the *future* through plans, hopes and expectations.

Despite its rejection as part of an old-fashioned “arborescent culture” (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 15), the “root metaphor” that links people and places is still in effect and inextricably binds geographies and social identities. Within the context of globalisation and increasing “de-territorialisation”, this bond is being enhanced and reshaped rather than fading. As many scholars have observed (Appadurai 1995, Hall 1999 [1993]) local communities reconfigure themselves precisely through the differential appropriation of global processes which they transform according to their needs, their past and the possibilities offered by a net of intensified communication and exchanges with other people and places.

Perhaps the best way to understand the transformation of a place into a homeland or more generally a locality of “belongingness” (Lovell 1998) is to study its “topographies”, namely, its material and discursive landmarks that allow people to map, literally and metaphorically, their places (Leontis 1995, Massey 1995b, Rose



1995) and locate their identities in them. These rely a great deal on the *activation* of a meaningful past, i.e., what is thought to have been inherited by the people of a place and makes them feel distinct from others. In this process of constructing identities and differences – which often involves the articulation of the local with the national and the global – the use of historical knowledge plays a crucial role: it legitimises current social action as well as resistance efforts against dominant practices and ideologies.

Modern Cretans symbolically appropriate the famous archaeological culture and its associated myths in the making of their own topographies of Crete. They notice endless continuities to and ruptures from the island's past, which they employ discursively in a variety of contexts. Historical knowledge based on the interpretation of Minoan material culture is encompassed in their conversations, their conflicts with others and undoubtedly in the image they want to project to outsiders. Through the reproduction in the everyday of specific perceptions of an overall Cretan history covering the time span from the Minoan period until the Second World War, a "history from below" (Sutton 1998: 8, cf. Rowlands 2002: 111) is created. This is a history neither necessarily written, as the official ones, nor always in accordance to them, but it is certainly told, performed and rehearsed.

This chapter attempts to analyse the creation of cultural topographies of Crete through the meanings ascribed to Minoan antiquities by people who were born and/or live on the island. It is divided into two parts. The first one looks at the position of a symbolic system of ideas about Minoan objects within the "circuit of culture" (Woodward 1997: 2), namely, the production, consumption and regulation of local identity. It deals with the way modern Cretans participate in the sharing of historical knowledge and its role as an expression of collective experience and mentality (cf. Fentress and Wickham 1992: 25, Sutton 1998). In the second part, more specific aspects of historical consciousness, beyond the confirmation of a distinct local identity – though not unrelated to it – are examined. These aspects concern people who have developed a special relationship with the Cretan archaeological heritage and use the past as a source of inspiration and justification for their choices in the present. They approach Minoan Crete as a reserve of humanistic values with significant didactic potential. Whether Cretan or not, these

people, represent “memory communities” (Burke 1989 cited in Alcock 2002: 15), i.e., collectivities acting in relation to the meaning they discover and appropriate in Cretan antiquity.

### **-Trying to infiltrate people’s collected stories**

In my attempt to trace aspects of the local historical consciousness as drawn on archaeological information and employed in the everyday, I came across people whose use of ancient themes and elements was of special interest. This chapter is based on their narratives. However, the way these informants talked about the issues that interested me bears out that they had shaped their – often soundly supported – views well before the interviews. Their very ability and eagerness to articulate – in the context of long and recorded discussions – the significance that an archaeological culture has had in their actions differentiates them from other informants who would (and did) express the meaning of the past in their lives in a less explicit and detailed way.

Yet it should be stated at the outset that these people are *not* some over-stretched examples of the (much-sought by myself) relationship of modern Crete with its ancient material culture. On the contrary, their narratives are representative of much broader mentalities. Their words and attitudes find support and justification in analogous albeit less eloquent or verbally articulated ways of approaching the past. As has often been emphasised (Tilley 1999, cf. Bloch 1998a), one of the basic roles of material culture is to communicate relations and attitudes that cannot be confined to explicit verbal explanations. Many elements of my informants’ narratives are indicative of wide-ranging aspects of Cretan localism, as well as of the content of diffused perceptions of history. Thus I “used” these people as cases of both individual and at the same time generalised ways of local thinking that put into words many of the visual and performative representations of Knossos and Minoan culture introduced in the previous chapters.

# 1. MINOAN CIVILISATION AND ASPECTS OF “CRETANNESS”

## I. THE CONTENT OF HISTORICAL PERCEPTIONS

*Knowledge about a place is intertwined with the place of knowledge.*

Leontis 1995: 18

### - “Everything started in Crete”

When Evans declared the discovery of the “first European civilisation” in the territory around the humble hamlet of Makrytichos, he could not possibly have imagined the success of his pronouncement on the subsequent generations of Cretans. The emphasis he put on the importance of his unequalled finds, largely combined with Greek myths, today forms the basis of the generalised conception on the island of the Minoan past as the cultural and chronological starting point not only of local but also of Greek and European history.

Crete persistently features as the “Mother of Europe”.<sup>1</sup> The geographical entity of modern Europe and its related culture merges with the Minoan finds and the legendary ancient mythological figure, i.e., the mother of Minos and mistress of Zeus. Motivated by the symbolic importance of the archaeological finds, as well as of the ancient myth of Europe, Cretans requested just before the beginning of year 2000 to celebrate the change of the millennium in Crete with all other European Union countries. This would have been a well-timed acknowledgment and public promotion of the contribution of the island to European culture, as was similarly implied by a sculpture presenting the abduction of Europe by Zeus, placed in front of the European Parliament in Brussels: the father of the ancient gods led this ancestral mythological figure to Crete, that is, today’s southernmost European soil.

---

<sup>1</sup> The phrase belongs to the popular Cretan musician Manolis Rassoulis, (local newspaper “Tolmi”, 19-5-1987: 4). Rassoulis has written many articles and books on Cretan culture, projecting Knossos as the producer of ecumenical truths (see also his website [www.rasoulis.gr](http://www.rasoulis.gr), acc. 13/12/2006).

The Cretan painter Avgerinos justifies the current importance of the myth of Europe. Ascribing to it historical and cultural validity, he asserts that

*... the myth tells the truth: civilisation began at the time a man in Crete stood on his feet. Crete has provided us with the foundations which were later expanded to the rest of Greece and Europe. The Golden Age of Classical Greece did not appear out of thin air!*

Avgerinos earns his living working as a graphic artist, mainly for commercial companies in Heraklion. He also makes paintings inspired by Cretan myths and archaeological books on Minoan culture. In these works, far away from the “easily digestible tourist products”,<sup>2</sup> archaeological information is combined with the portrayed myths, e.g., the abduction of Europe, the myth of Bacchus and Ariadne, the Kouretes’ dance, the birth of Zeus, etc., giving to them, as well as to other scenes known mainly through Renaissance paintings, a Cretan, archaeologically-oriented image. For him, all modern achievements of Cretan, and by implication Greek and European culture, are rooted in Minoan Crete: The bull-leaping depicted on the Knossian fresco is “rightly presented” by local organisations as the predecessor of the Olympic Games and generally the practice of sports; the mythical laws that Minos received from Zeus imply the core of the legislation in the rest of Greece throughout subsequent periods; the great poets, legislators and philosophers of Classical Greece, e.g., Homer, Solon, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, repeated Minoan ideas or (lost to us) Minoan works. Even robots, a modern expression of advanced technology, can be found in the myth of Talos, a metal creature that according to the ancient legend protected Crete from its enemies.

Several other people on Crete share Avgerinos’s insistence on the primacy of Minoan civilisation and the Cretan myths in human history or relate the Minoan material culture to contemporary accomplishments. The popular archaeological rhetoric about “the first European civilisation” may either have an all-inclusive referential validity or regard specific aspects of the Cretan Bronze Age society. For

---

<sup>2</sup> As it is written in the brochure of one of his exhibitions.

instance, a Cretan architect, Kostas Rodoussakis, maintains that it was the Minoans who created, among their other superlative works, the most harmonious architecture, in which people and nature co-existed:

*[The Minoans] brought their relationship with nature inside their living spaces; they could see the bushes, the morphology of the ground, the greenery, the sea, the small river [and] had this tremendous capability of adjusting their architecture to the environment without suppressing it... And the things they could not enjoy visually they reproduced on the frescoes... The columns they were using for their buildings offered them the possibility to have openings to the otherwise shut walls and communicate with the outside world, to incorporate the nature inside the building...*

The architectural complex of Knossos is also seen to have influenced major modern works around the world. Even Carlo Scarpa, one of the most venerated post-war architects in Italy, was stimulated by Knossos (although he never acknowledged it), Kostas argues: “*He did nothing else but repeat the canalisation of water seen at the palace*”. And the (so-called by Evans) “theatre” at Knossos not only was the first one in the world, as the tour guides often state to the groups of visiting tourists (see above, chapter 2) but also the first “*type of an ‘action theatre’: the small corridors around it and its multiple levels prove that the performances given were not static: they were carried out on different levels and the performers were acting not only on the stage but were following different routes...*”, i.e., as in modern experimental theatre.

At the same time, the attribution of major technical, artistic and broadly cultural achievements to the nearly mythicised Minoan society results to an almost automatic exclusion from Bronze Age Crete of all negative features of our time. Wars, violence, social exploitation, absolutism, etc. had no place in ancient Crete.<sup>3</sup> When in the early 1980s archaeological indications of human sacrifices were found at

---

<sup>3</sup> This tendency follows Evans’s construct but also more recent theories sustained by other archaeologists. Among them, the prominent Greek archaeologist N. Platon supported the view of Minoan Crete not only as a peaceful society but also as a “cultural miracle” (see 2001 [1964]).

Knossos and the Minoan sanctuary of Anemospilia in Archanes, strong popular reactions were caused in the Cretan society. The practice of human sacrifice contradicted the established representations of Minoan rulers as “enlightened” and of Minoan Crete as the cultural pioneer of the Western world. Obviously, such “customs” suit only primitive people and not “the first Europeans”. The archaeological interpretations provided at the time are still remembered and dismissed as unacceptable and totally intolerable.<sup>4</sup> *“Nobody can imagine that the Minoans used to sacrifice human beings. And even if it happened once, you cannot generalise about the Minoan civilisation as a whole. Here there was neither coercion nor barbarity (“Edo den ihan oute eksanagasmō oute varvarotites”)* argues Rodoussakis, who feels that he has to defend the peaceful image of Minoan Cretans against embarrassing “uncivilised practices” on the island, even if these occurred thousands of years ago.

---

<sup>4</sup> In relation to those unexpected archaeological data, the then widely-circulated Greek magazine, “Tachydromos” published a corresponding article by Rena Theologidou. The journalist recorded the collective embarrassment: as follows: *“Cannibals? Our Ancestors? Impossible...”* (cited in Farnoux 1996: 141).

**-The “Minoan Greeks”, the Dorian “prelude” and the historical tribal sequence**

*The Minoan Cretan was civilised  
And the modern Cretan with the old one  
Is tightly bound.  
 (“O Minoitis Ktitikos itan politismenos  
ki o torinos me ton palio  
ine sfihtha demenos”)<sup>5</sup>*

Cretan mantinada

Not all of Evans’s theories have been accepted in Crete without objection, disagreement or even resistance. The well-known, anti-classicism of the British archaeologist (see above, chapter 1), for example, did not find on the island any proper ground to develop. In Avgerinos’s as well as in many Cretan’s words, the Minoans were Greek like all the other tribes of antiquity, the Ionians, the Achaeans (i.e., the Mycenaeans) and the Dorians:

*Minoan Cretans were Greek; they did not belong to any other tribe. Of course after them several other Greek tribes came to Crete. There have always been movements and migrations; this is something entirely Greek. It’s the Greek spirit itself.<sup>6</sup>*

In contrast to this very popular view, nowadays most archaeologists, both Greek and foreign, would avoid any assumption concerning the “ethnicity” of the Minoans. Not only because this would echo the discipline’s old-fashioned nationalist concerns but also because any such hypothesis would contravene the available linguistic material.

---

<sup>5</sup> The mantinada is attributed to the Cretan musician and couplet composer (“mantinadologos”) Ioannis Dermitzakis (1907-1984), see <http://www.krassanakis.gr/mantinades.htm>, acc. 14-11-2005.

<sup>6</sup> There is a large series of studies conducted mainly by Cretans (folklorists, school teachers, or simply lovers of antiquity) regarding the ethnicity of the Minoans or even of King Minos himself. Many relevant sites are maintained on the web. See, for example, the site of a teacher who considers the school history books as containing “horrible lies” about the assumed non-Greek origins of the Minoans (<http://www.krassanakis.gr/Cretan-history.htm> acc. 5-10-2006). According to the site’s author, “these views are either wrong hypotheses or are owed to the villainy of anti-Greek (‘anthellinika’) centres” (ibid.)

Unlike the Mycenaean form of writing (Linear B), the Minoan form (Linear A) has not been deciphered. Avgerinos, however, and several local amateurs believe that Linear A was a Greek script. This view is often heard in the Cretan media and on the web, where passionate researchers regularly announce that they have successfully deciphered Linear A, or even the more mysterious script on the Phaistos disc, as another form of the Greek language.<sup>7</sup>

More compelling though is the identification of the Minoans not only with “the Greek race” but with the so-called “Greek spirit”. This is a series of cultural traits united in a single cultural force whose trajectory starts in the Minoan times and continues to the present. In this 5000-year-long racial and/or cultural continuity of Cretan history that supersedes even the most hard-core archaeological theories, the ancient “tribes” of the Mycenaeans and the Dorians signify the gradual decline of the Minoan civilisation.

Avgerinos comments on the tribes that dominated the region after the Minoans:

*Although they transferred the Cretan spirit to the Peloponnese, they were more violent and not so much interested in the culture and the quality of Cretan civilisation. They were cruder than the Minoans and their art was crude as well.*

Such views are grounded on old diffusionist and evolutionary archaeological theories, according to which, the Dorians, a warlike Greek tribe worshipping male divinities, invaded the island at approximately the beginning of the tenth century BC. They prevailed by means of their iron weapons over the Mycenaeans who, before them, had conquered Minoan Crete but had only bronze arms. Certainly, this view “produces” more ancient ancestors for modern Crete. Yet, it makes the peaceful Minoans look a little distant, especially when the Dorians are associated with the proud, straightforward but “warlike” Cretans of recent times. In any case, this

---

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, the work of the researcher of ancient scripts, A. Vassilakis, on <http://kairatos.com.gr/index.htm> (acc. 6-10-2006). On the site it is announced that “Linear A and B scripts as well as the Cretan Hieroglyphics rendered the Greek language”. Archaeologists, however, appear very sceptical and do not accept any of these (or other amateurs’) interpretations as valid or convincing.



apparent contradiction is resolved through the theory that all ancient peoples were tied together not only racially but also through a common spirit, an essential cultural bond. Avgerinos explains:

*...Today we don't have the sensitivity people had in the Minoan period... Undoubtedly, we [i.e., modern Cretans] belong to the Dorians, both our polity and our spirit... But the Cretan [i.e., the Minoan] spirit is still beneath the Dorian Greek...*

Avgerinos's words bring to the fore the common association of "traditional" Cretans, especially those living in the mountainous Western regions, with the ancient Dorians. The, until recently, hard and austere life of these populations, living in relative isolation and sharing a strict moral code which was not always in accordance with the laws of the state or those imposed by the island's conquerors, seems close to the image of the ancient tribe with their iron weapons. The coarse, non-conformists and "unsubdued" Western Cretans, always passionate for freedom, became thus the "Dorians" of the recent patriotic history of Crete.

The family of the Herakliote architect Kostas Rodoussakis originates precisely from one of these legendary "lawless" Western areas, Sfakia. The man repeats the common statement that the coarse "Dorian spirit" or "ethos" prevailed in Western Crete and that it was preserved there until recently thanks to the closed environment of the inhospitable western mountains. Yet this ethos, Kostas believes, is now disappearing because of the presence of mass tourism and the moral consequences of uncontrollable money-hunting. But for Kostas, this apparent contradiction between Dorian polity and Minoan peacefulness by no means contests the narrative about his ancient descent. In explaining his character and culture, the man blends Dorian and Minoan "ancestors"; the latter are linked to Heraklion, i.e., his birthplace and current home. He considers himself a "grafted Minoan". *"In Crete", he explains, "the seeds of all new elements are always inseminated to produce something new. Look at the foreigners who come to stay in Crete: after a while they become Cretans"*. Again, this is the "Cretan spirit": a powerful cultural force capable of combining and assimilating all new-coming cultural idioms independently from their historical circumstances.

The symbolic association of western Crete, where significantly fewer Minoan sites have been discovered, with more “dissident” (and masculine) values of recent Cretan culture satisfactorily covers the local discourse on historical continuity. It not only explains why the Minoan element was subjected, though without having totally disappeared, to the more powerful Dorian invaders but it also justifies through the evocation of the rough mountain landscape the negative, aggressive and overtly androcentric aspects of modern Cretanness, even the indifference to state laws, aspects stereotypically attributed to Cretans by other Greeks.

In what Herzfeld has called “cultural intimacy” (1997), where embarrassing aspects of the collective national self, generally dismissed by nationalist rhetoric, are recognised internally by the social agents, this particular negotiation of ancient Cretan history temporarily finds a discursive justification. While these negative aspects (practices, behaviours, discourses) are ardently negated as projecting a negative image of the country, in practice, they form part of collective self-knowledge and are deeply engaged in the negotiation by citizens of the state’s official essentialisms (ibid). Perhaps the collective embarrassment Cretans experienced because of the archaeological evidence of human sacrifices in Minoan times was caught up in the same “structural dilemma” between self-display and self-knowledge (in Herzfeld’s terms, ibid. and 1987). The excavated human remains unexpectedly damaged the image of an ideal ancestral society, allowing for potential embarrassing associations with the present and the creation of negative impressions to outsiders, e.g., the other Greeks or the tourists who have shown special interest in these enigmatic Minoan practices.

Thus in the working of Cretan and national relations, an ancient ancestor, the Dorian, – who also fits perfectly with the male deity of Zeus, king of gods and humans, austere, proud and very hospitable like western Cretans – is secured for this special region, an area of Crete remarkable for its struggles against foreign conquerors but somewhat “embarrassing” which, in addition, is also deprived of impressive Minoan sites and relevant “European” achievements. Continuity is thus reassured and the Minoan past, far more important than any other period of the island’s history, is consolidated in the present.

## **II. FROM “HISTORY” TO AN EMBODIED “TRADITION”:**

### **MINOAN HISTORY AND LOCAL CUSTOMS**

*The Minoan achievements passed to the people who came after them. 1,500 to 2,000 years later, the Greeks inherited the Minoans' accumulated power of observation. Their thoughts and searches make everything work faster... Whatever we see with our eyes is deceitful. The Minoans knew that. They trained our genes and their knowledge passed on to all generations until today. It's of no importance that this civilisation disappeared. What matters is that all that they did was transmitted and diffused amongst the people. You go, for example, to a village on Mt Ida and you come upon an illiterate old man; you ask him: "Why is your daughter called Amaltheia?" and he replies in a gentle voice: "What can I tell you, I don't get on well with the saints". Later on he will speak to you about the Underworld and its king, "His name is Minos, isn't it?" he will ask you. You see, you don't need to have gone to school to know these things; they are inside us. (Kostas Rodoussakis)*

These words are a good introduction to the way many Cretans think about tradition, especially those who, motivated by personal enthusiasm, research Minoan material culture for their own purposes. Usually with no connection to the academic domain, these people do not simply repeat the common statement about the Minoan origins of Cretan customs and traditions. In fact, they eagerly include the ancient past in what they call “genuine Cretan culture” and experience it as an integral part of it.

Rodoussakis is one of these passionate amateurs of all things Minoan. During his long stay in Italy and Spain, where he studied and worked as an architect, he learnt to appreciate local cultures. At the same time, he also consolidated his attachment to Crete, i.e., his own place and culture. His account about the crucial relevance that Minoan civilisation has to the present is coloured by the ardent use of several words in the local dialect. Like other educated Cretans living mainly in the large cities of the island and having no fear of being associated with illiterate villagers and

provincial manners, he proudly maintains the local accent and idiom as a linguistic “topography” of his homeland. This is a practice that suggests one more Cretan particularity within perceptions of a standardised Greek national culture.<sup>8</sup>

Rodoussakis finds that the knowledge that the Minoans accumulated thousands of years ago has not been lost; the end of an archaeological culture does not mean the end of the beneficial action of those Bronze Age “ancestors”. Their achievements are still to be encountered in modern Crete, even among those who have never had a corresponding education at school, e.g., the illiterate villagers of Crete who, according to Rodoussakis, carry the Minoan heritage deep inside them. In this way, the ancient heritage becomes tantamount to a person’s inheritance and the two concepts, heritage and inheritance, in Greek signified by the same word (“*klironomia*”) turn out to be nearly synonymous. Thus the notion of cultural continuity develops into an embodied cultural reality.

A hidden poetry lies behind Rodoussakis’s words. His question quoted above about the old man’s daughter conflates antiquity and the Orthodox faith. It also connects two different cultural elements and worlds: Amaltheia, the mythical goat who fed Zeus in the ancient sacred site of the Idean cave, is poetically linked to the Christian saints after whom the majority of Greek people are named.<sup>9</sup>

As has been shown in ethnographic accounts in Greece, especially by Sutton (1998) and Herzfeld (1991), naming practices in the country often bring together historical knowledge and the traditional structures of local kinship systems. For example, the

---

<sup>8</sup> To give another example of such a conscious use of the Cretan dialect – when one would expect otherwise – the third grade teacher of the Primary School of Heraklion (where I attended all history classes for one year) told me that she prefers to talk to her pupils with specific words from the Cretan dialect. Although the national curriculum emphasises the use of a standardised form of Greek, the teacher thinks that through the conscious and selective use of the Cretan idiom, especially when the children play the young Minoans (“*Minoitakia*”), she transmits some of the local cultural values to them.

<sup>9</sup> Note here the similarities with the representation of antiquity occurring at the Giacynthia festival on Mt Ida, which I described in chapter 2. All cultural activities concerning Zeus were held in relation to the new church of St Giacynthus, the recently “discovered” Greek-Orthodox “saint of love” after whom the festival is named. The whole cultural initiative is an extremely interesting example of an “invented tradition”, conceived by a famous musician from Anogia village. It has been enthusiastically accepted by local authorities, the local church and the numerous friends of Anogia all over Greece as embracing the essence of the mountain culture of Crete beyond kitsch folkloric revivals.

ferocious debate about the right of Greece's neighbouring country to be called "Macedonia" (Sutton 1998: 173-201) is not unlike the passion with which baptismal names are endowed in Greece. Understood in the logic of inheritance of personal traits and material property from the person after whom the inheritor is named, the use of place names by people who appear as appropriating the country's heritage and territories seems dangerous and unacceptable. In other words, it undermines the perceived meaning of interrelated religious, kinship and inheritance practices or even the efficiency of Greek nationalism which persistently uses metaphors of kinship (see Herzfeld 1997: 74-88) in its rhetoric.

In the same spirit, in Rodoussakis's story the supposed ignorance of the old Cretan man concerning the ancient figures is conflated with his daughter's ancient name and his Christian faith. Minoan past, Christianity and personal choices, such as name giving, are united in an "unpretentious and sincere" tradition. It is the same tradition that makes the old man ask his knowledgeable interlocutor to confirm the name of the ancient king of the underworld.

Furthermore, the figure of the old man living on Mt Ida, the island's mountain par excellence, offers an example of the archetypal, though illiterate, Cretan man whose words reveal a deep and authentic wisdom inherited from generation to generation. The overall narration reveals affinities with broader perceptions of Cretan culture and the oft-cited "Cretan glance" or "Cretan way of looking at things" ("i kritiki matia") as formulated by Kazantzakis (see the introductory chapter, also Levitt 1980). In the description of the "Cretan soul" to the French public in the 1950s, the local novelist and philosopher mentioned the following dialogue that he had with an old villager:

*'What was life like for you, grandfather?' I asked an old Cretan one day. He was a hundred years old, scarred by old wounds and blind. He was warming himself in the sun, huddled in the doorway of his hut. He was 'proud of ear' as we say on Crete. He couldn't hear well. I repeated my question to him, 'What was your long life like, grandfather, your hundred years?' 'Like a glass of cold water', he replied. 'And are you still thirsty?' He raised his hand abruptly.*

*'Damn those who are thirsty no more', he shouted... That's the Cretans for you. How could I not make a symbol of them?'<sup>10</sup>*

Similar symbols of old Cretans are still often made today. People, Cretan or not, who live or visit the island often search for this “genuine” essence of the local culture which is based on an accumulated wisdom. Perhaps not accidentally, in Kazantzakis’s story, the man is blind, suggesting that the “Cretan glance” does not depend on external or superfluous factors but on an inner, spiritual approach to life.

For some of my informants this “approach” is associated with a wisdom originating in antiquity. Avgerinos maintains that in his life as a Cretan and as a painter he “carries” inside him the Minoan past. He believes that an unconscious memory of this past is what has made him paint in his style since the age of six. He has noticed this similarity to aspects of the Minoan society – which “only apparently is accidental” – in regard to several manifestations of his life:

*Listening to music, dancing, going to the countryside that I loved, going hunting and engaging archery are things that I have been doing since I was a child. I didn't know then, of course, about their relationship to the Minoans, I did all this spontaneously... I have made hundreds of bows... even the game we called here “gourounaki”, what is otherwise called “hockey”, left me with signs on my legs. I didn't know then that it was so old, but it is; it's 3,000 years old. We played other Minoan games as well... All that I'm telling you can be seen on Minoan seals, but of course, then we were not aware of it...*

The painter believes that he became conscious of this link when he acquired the relevant historical knowledge. He recognised the Minoan origins of his “Cretan habits” when he studied relevant treatises. However, the lack of similar knowledge that characterises many of his fellow Cretans is not seen as a disadvantage: on the

---

<sup>10</sup> From Pierre Sipriot’s interview with Nikos Kazantzakis, French Radio, 6th May 1955. (Translation by the Historical Museum of Crete)

contrary, it proves the truth and value of the Cretans' genuine link to the past – just like in the cases of Kazantzakis's and Rodoussakis's old Cretans:

*In their ignorance, Cretans practise their customs because they feel like it; it's something their fathers did as well. They act like this because they like it, without being aware of the meaning of their habits. But this is comforting and good! Alas if they were following a conscious tradition because they were constrained to do so!*

*Very few know that their dance called 'Siganos' is an ancient one... that the 'Prinianos' dance, which reminds you of a coil, is the coil of the labyrinth, ... or that when they jump forward they are repeating the Minoan jump called 'cybesthema'. Nevertheless they continue to do it! The first dancer says 'I am doing a figure', but this is the Minoan cybesthema! I want these people to be proud and not ashamed of this figure.*

Moreover, an additional strong argument concerning the perceived deep bond between past and present in the everyday life of the island is offered by the practice of hospitality. Being something that Cretans do because they “*feel like it and not because they are obliged to do*”, as Avgerinos points out, hospitality, a basic aspect of Cretan collective self-representation, is justified as rooted in the ancient past.

Locally made statements which underline the superior values of the free and unconditional offer of hospitality beyond obligation (although its practice follows its own implicit rules regarding the time, the place and the form of reciprocation, see Herzfeld 1997: 83) are rhetorically attributed to the archetypal figure of Zeus, also because of his heavily gendered representation. Treatment of guests in public is basically a male habit and finds its most performative expression in mountainous Crete, the idealised place of Cretan traditions: “*Is there any household in Crete whose residents do not welcome their guests? Isn't this our tradition? Isn't it our place? Crete may not be 'the island of the happy people' but at least it is the island of the 'hospitable Zeus'*”, the painter asserts and in practice he makes every effort to respect his views on any occasion in his overtly hospitable household.

Hospitality is profoundly involved in the performance of local identity. Treating foreigners (“*xenous*”), i.e., people from other Greek places or even other countries, to food and drink (“*kerasma*”) is characteristic of a Cretan idiom that ethically elevates the host exactly because it is presented as a conscious and deliberate choice requiring only moral recognition and not a direct material reciprocation. In other words, it gives him the advantage of managing a relationship with the person that accepts the treatment. The association of such gestures of generosity to an age-long tradition allows Cretans to differentiate their place from others, especially the Western countries, where, as they often argue, “everything has to be paid for and nothing is offered for free” (cf. Herzfeld 1991: 84). In other words, an idealised past supports an equally idealised present in which local culture is marked by spontaneous, generous and affective social relationships.

It is obvious that local practices associated with recent traditions on many occasions are seen as the lively confirmation of an important ancient heritage. These are traditions that have the power to transmit significant values to the legitimate inheritors of the ancient culture. Mary Houlaki, the choreographer of the “Minoan Ritual” (see above, chapter 2) notes that Cretan handicraftsmanship, e.g., embroidery and jewellery making, has yielded objects of exceptional beauty and technical sophistication during different periods, for example the last three centuries and the Minoan times. This technical and aesthetic ability, she argues, may survive for thousands of years and remain inside Cretan people in an almost mystical way, in the form of a “dormant” knowledge: *“There may be a huge gap between the Minoan techniques and the recent handicraft traditions of Crete. The motifs are very different, of course. But how can we be sure that the ability to be so good in what you make is not something inherited from that past, something that remains?”* the lady asks rhetorically, implying a sort of metaphysical similarity between old and recent things. These, otherwise unexplained, similarities between present and past, are actually Cretans’ inheritance from the Minoan antiquity, for as Rodoussakis argued, *“the Minoans trained the [Cretans’] genes in order to cope with a deceitful world”*...

To sum up, historical knowledge about Minoan Crete is often retraced in recent or current traditional practices. Although tightly bound up with the familiar discourse



of the Greek nation-state, the use of archaeological knowledge does not merely aim to prove Greek racial or cultural continuity on the island. It also merges with local customs and traditions, such as hospitality, name-giving and dancing, as well as certain material forms, giving meaning to Cretanness. All these together are engaged in the reproduction of local cultural identity in the context of a rather a-historic and all-inclusive humanistic attitude to life, which goes beyond the specificities of time and circumstances and encompasses a wide-ranging field of activities and Cretan cultural characteristics.

### III. THE MINOAN PAST AS “PROPERTY”

The incorporation of the Minoan past in the local traditions actually strengthens the perception of antiquity as a local collective property. Several stories of belonging to the island crystallised around the symbolic appropriation of Minoan culture, confirming the feeling one has in Crete that the past here is somewhat “owned”.

Obviously, any exchange of property always has its own rules. Avgerinos, for example, does not sell his paintings with themes drawn from the Cretan antiquity to non-Cretans. He judges them as the most personal and important of his works and wants them to remain on the island, possessed by locals. Even when he had a personal exhibition in Athens, he decided to sell his works to Cretan migrants living in the capital and not to people “unrelated” to Crete:

*... This is a sensitive issue...I have never sold a painting to a non-Cretan, especially these works [i.e., depicting the Minoan scenes]...I don't want them to be in other people's hands...I want them to be sold in Crete, to Cretans, because I want to test whether other people share my sensitivity... Today most people are after their own interests. I am doing “flight tests”, that's why I count on the Cretan man. [...] Besides this, I prefer to sell the big paintings to hotels and other public spaces so that several people can see them... Do you think it's chauvinist? It may be bizarre but this is how I feel. I say: 'Cretans should appreciate these works first, so I'll give the paintings to them. It doesn't matter how many they are'.*

His paintings, themselves very personal and didactic topographies of Crete, represent the local claim of a unique heritage, of which even the artistic reproduction rightfully belongs to the modern inhabitants of the place.

Yet the symbolic ownership of the past implied by Avgerinos's emotional devotion to his homeland characterises broader, though less explicit, Cretan attitudes to

ancient heritage. These regard the accurate and supposedly “ethical interpretation” of the Cretan past and its presentation to the public. Not rarely, some of these interpretations are contested and the ancient Cretan myths are deemed as needing “defence” from disgraceful and humiliating uses.

In April 2002, for example, the “death” of an ancient mythological hero became the matter of a brief contest. The news that the British film director Peter Greenaway was going to make a show about the myth of Icarus caused an interesting debate about the approval or not of such an initiative. The show would be financed by the Greek Ministry of Culture and then included in the Cultural Olympiad.<sup>11</sup> The arguments heard locally against the event were based on the fact that Icarus was presented by Greenaway as having connection neither to his land, i.e., Knossos nor to the island of Icaria, where, according to the legend, he fell and died.<sup>12</sup> Contrary to what people on both islands would expect, Greenaway was planning to “bury” him in Naples, Italy, to which there was no link, apart from the fact, Cretans argued, that Italy was also financing the production. During a parliamentary session, a Cretan MP railed against the then Minister of Culture over his plans,<sup>13</sup> while the local radio and the Cretan Press gave essential publicity to the fact (Fig. 58, 59). The issue about the “Italian Icarus” was introduced in a unanimous perspective with societies and associations from the island of Icaria. Here follows part of a relevant dialogue between a Cretan journalist and the Icarian representative about the “Greenaway issue” as broadcast on the Cretan radio:

*The Icarian representative: [...] In any case, the Cultural Olympiad managing Greek cultural heritage at such a level should be sponsoring issues that propound the historical continuity of the Aegean Sea and not the burial of Icarus in Naples, Italy. For this reason and because Crete and Knossos are inextricably connected to*

---

<sup>11</sup> A series of major cultural events in relation to the Athens Olympic Games. They took place nationwide from 2001 to 2004 and were financed by the government.

<sup>12</sup> Icarus was the son of Daedalus, the genius engineer who worked for Minos. When father and son had to escape from Crete, Daedalus prepared two pairs of wings made of wax so that they could fly away. But Icarus went too close to the sun. His wings melted and the youngster lost his life.

<sup>13</sup> Local newspaper “Patris”, 19-4-2002, [www.patris.gr](http://www.patris.gr), acc. 19-4-2002.

*history – you know that better than I do – we protest and call on the Cretans as well as on all other people of the Aegean Sea to assist us and be on our side; otherwise, we are consenting to a distortion of the myth, to the formation of [false] consciousnesses and impressions based on facts that have no connection to the Aegean and its Greekness. [...]*

*The journalist: Each artist may do whatever he wants, whatever he likes. Okay. Nobody is imposing censorship. But we have the obligation and the right to protect **what belongs to us.***

*Mrs Pateraki: The issue is not Mr Greenaway's conception. Mr Greenaway and any other artist can have anything in their minds. Let alone the shows we watch on TV where Hercules is Italian. We may even see a Moroccan Socrates some day or whatever. [...]*

*The journalist: ... the myth is a hymn to the human spirit that first had the mere idea of flying and we must not forget that this myth is clearly Cretan. It is a Cretan-born myth ("Cretagenes"). Flying is the ultimate idea of an initiating ritual which was known in Minoan Crete and has survived in the years after. It is not by chance that people were flying. So why couldn't this be a hymn to the ones that created this tradition?*

*Mrs Pateraki: This myth is a symbolism throughout the whole world. [...]*

*The journalist: We received hundreds of calls from ordinary people. But we didn't see any local authority being alerted. They are somewhat slow. But we trust people a lot. [...] Where are the other local organisations of Crete? We cannot have an Italian Icarus!*

("Radio Crete", emphasis added)

This example of the "shocking Italian Icarus" shows that the politics of appropriation of the ancient Cretan myths imposes certain rules on their use by non-Cretans.

Artworks based on or inspired by these myths must follow some conventions which do not contest their Cretan “authorship”. Especially when the Greek government finances artistic productions inspired by these myths, it is deemed as morally obliged to support their Greekness and “historicity” and not to contribute to their distortion or even their “falsification”.<sup>14</sup> Once again, myths appear to have historical validity to such an extent that their “distortion”, or rather their artistic negotiation, appears to contest the role and unquestioned position of their legitimate inheritors.

Nevertheless, the most intolerable aspect of the issue was the fact that the show was to be presented in Italy and Greece and also, via the Web, all around the world. It was this global dimension of the myth’s “falsification” that made the initiative so repugnant. Besides this, the action was taken at the expense of the Greek citizens. Avgerinos eloquently commented on the subject: *“Is it possible to accept someone who comes to break down your house and then pay him on top of that?”* The “house” that has to be respected by both the national authorities and all foreigners is the Cretan past: a metaphor that not only connects history to the everyday but also the public to the private domain, i.e., the heritage of the island to people’s individual lives. In this way, the past becomes an entity in local possession, which is debatable or “usable” by others only under certain conditions, as we shall see in the next part of this section.

---

<sup>14</sup> The term was used several times in the presentation of the issue on the local media. See for example, local Newspaper “Patris”, 19/4/2002 ([www.patris.gr](http://www.patris.gr), acc. 19/4/2002).

**III.a. ANTIQUITIES AS MATERIAL PROPERTY:**  
**THE PROTESTS IN FRONT OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM**  
**IN FEBRUARY 1979. THEN AND NOW**

The symbolic ownership of the past deeply involves Minoan artefacts as well. Their tangible nature makes the effects of this ownership much more felt when it comes under dispute. Especially when the management of the archaeological heritage is contested, the Minoan antiquities may be approached literally as property belonging to the Cretan people.

This is actually what happened in February 1979 when a great number of famous Minoan objects from the Heraklion museum, coming mainly from Knossos and other archaeological sites of the island, were to be transferred among other exhibits from the rest of Greece to France and the United States for two exhibitions, at the Louvre and the Metropolitan Museum respectively (see Hamilakis and Yalouri 1996: 125-27). The initiative caused strenuous objections amongst the members of the archaeological community of Crete, concerning not only the discredited safety of the exhibits but also – and most importantly – the reason for sending them abroad. In a conference in Heraklion, the former director of the archaeological museum, N. Platon, informed the public about the issue and discouraged the “*expatriation of ancestral treasures to countries where other incomparable Greek treasures are kept in bondage, looted with cruelty by audacious hands*”.<sup>15</sup> The respected archaeologist’s comment was an open challenge to Western states. Lending ancient objects to their museums was seen as collaboration with those people whose arrogant representatives once separated the archaeological treasures from the land where they were originally made and discovered.

Reading the local newspapers of those times one can trace back the events. The different stances to the problem and the way it was approached by the numerous parts involved are also revealed. The then conservative government justified the

---

<sup>15</sup> From Prof. Platon’s lecture. Local newspaper “I Allagi”, 17-1-79: 1.

exhibitions as “*a weapon beyond diplomacy in order to deal efficiently with critical national issues*”.<sup>16</sup> In the arena of world politics, Greece could approach Western countries by playing with the asset of museum loans. Nevertheless, contrary to the government’s rationale, the Cretan demonstrators protested against “*the selling out of the Cretan soul*” and emphasised their “*open accounts with history*”. Teachers and students agreed to participate in the protests in the context of the same patriotic *raison d’être*. “*The seed of history that our teachers have ‘planted’ inside us, even forcefully sometimes, is now growing and bursting*”: this is how a student then explained his wholehearted presence in front of the museum.<sup>17</sup> The political – in the broad sense of the term – meaning of the protest was obvious in the way each group involved – and there was hardly any not involved at all – associated the future of museum exhibits with broader issues. For instance, the Greek Communist Party (KKE) saw in the Cretan mobilisation a “*rallying thought as necessary to the struggle for national independence and the suppression of the [American] military bases*.”<sup>18</sup> Similarly, the Union of Teachers of the city of Heraklion announced its fierce opposition to “*the uprooting of heritage from its appropriate environment [i.e., Crete] where for thousands of years it had been sanctified with struggles and sacrifices*”.<sup>19</sup> Despite the fact that Minoan heritage had been hidden in the earth until the year 1900, the teachers alongside many other protesters had combined the numerous struggles of the Cretan people against the Turks and the Germans that occurred in the last centuries with the millennia-long age of the Minoan artefacts. In fact, as a school president, now retired, told me, those events were the best and most effective lessons his pupils could have attended for the protection of the island’s ancient heritage.

Local pride, protection of local identity and safeguarding of Cretan values or, for some, independence from Western capitalism and colonialist rationales was critically

---

<sup>16</sup> Local newspaper “Messogios”, 20-2-79.

<sup>17</sup> N. Kakaounakis, Newspaper “Ta Nea”, 6-3-79, reprinted on the local newspaper “I Allagi”, 7-3-79: 1 and 4.

<sup>18</sup> Local newspaper “I Allagi”, 7-3-79: 4. Still today, the presence of an American military base in Crete causes discussions on the “contested sovereignty” of the Greeks on their territories.

<sup>19</sup> “I Allagi”, 16-1-79: 4.

dependent on the physical “fate” of some objects, hitherto destined to exist only in silent and neglected glass-cases.

As Hamilakis and Yalouri noted in their presentation of the event (1996: 126), Cretans used the “rhetoric of the Greek nation about the uniqueness and the superiority of the Greek past... in order to resist state and government” but also “against the economic super-powers of the West perceived as attempting to remove from Greece, from Crete, one of the few strong and valuable ‘weapons’ left – its highly acclaimed, and internationally praised and admired antiquities” (ibid: 127). This was a play between *us* (“the archaeologically rich Cretans”) and *them* (“the economically powerful and despotic nations of the West” as well as the Greek government which appeared as indifferent to the antiquities). The different perspectives over the issue were also reflected in the contrasting statements put forward at the outcome of the conflict. Thus the then prime-minister of the country, K. Karamanlis, stressed the “*ridiculous face of Greece internationally*”<sup>20</sup> whereas the mayor of Heraklion triumphantly announced “*the didactic* [i.e., to other peoples’ eyes] *victory*” of the Herakliote society<sup>21</sup> (see also Doris 1981) when, finally, the government decided to send abroad all other Greek antiquities except the Cretan ones.

### **-Remembering the events**

*In remembering, we come back to the things that matter.*

Casey 1987: xii

At the time of the protests, the Archaniote lady Maria Xanthaki played a decisive role, which she now recalls with great emotion. As she emphasises, she took part in them not simply as a member of the local council of the village of Archanes but mainly, as a Cretan citizen who was and still is “*totally opposed to the export and*

---

<sup>20</sup> Local newspaper “Messogios”, 3-3-79: 1.

<sup>21</sup> M. Karellis, Local newspaper “I Allagi”, 2-3-79: 1 and 4.



*the uprooting of our [i.e., the Cretan] cultural heritage*”<sup>22</sup> (see Fig. 55, 57). The decisions of all authorities of the region to occupy the museum and obstruct the removal of the objects for the international exhibitions, as the mayor of Heraklion had suggested, was “*unanimous and above party interests*”:

*We had to safeguard the treasure we had discovered. We had to hand it over to future generations. [This duty] does not end with our generation. We have to know and learn and study all these antiquities and this is what the next generations have to do as well... We have a moral and patriotic obligation to support all this, regardless of the fact that now the antiquities are taken all over... (“tora ta ’houne kani diagoumi”) Anyway. We worked with all our soul; we left our families behind, our work, our personal commitments and [those of] our relatives who were ill... We stood there, strong like rocks. Firm. (“Ke stathikame eki vrahi. Akloniti”)*

The lady describes how people of all ages, ideologies and occupations started arriving spontaneously in front of the museum. The bells of the churches were ringing; the taxi-drivers were sounding their horns. People came from all over Crete to chant slogans, to play music, to eat, to spend day and night in front of the museum’s gates. Their physical presence would protect and defend the museum exhibits. In the lady’s discourse, the significance of the material substance of the objects under question was entirely embodied: the Minoan heritage was at risk of death and as such was presented on the local newspapers and the demonstrators’ banners (Fig. 56).

The metaphors she uses to describe the open boxes destined to contain the antiquities are indicative of this identification of the museum exhibits with human bodies:

*Look! I said when I went inside the museum. They are like coffins!  
Coffins! Sarcophagi! Their view was macabre...*

---

<sup>22</sup> All quotes in italics are by Mrs Xanthaki unless otherwise indicated.

Several groups appear to have played a special role in the protests. Among them there are two which deserve some particular attention because of their unexpected, at first glance, participation. The first one is the huge group of Cretan villagers who came from the rural areas of the island. What is interesting in their case is that many of them had never been inside the museum before. Notwithstanding, this did not prevent them from responding enthusiastically to the call for protection of the museum exhibits.

Things nearly went out of control when an enormous number of guns and weapons of all kinds, varying from machine-guns to grenades, were placed on the roof of a neighbouring hotel and pointed at the museum. Going up to examine the situation, Maria Xanthaki found herself in the middle of a rather unexpected image with the angry villagers threatening to intervene:

*They were determined! So I told them, 'For God's sake you shouldn't use the guns!' And they told me: 'Maria, never say that again! If the antiquities were taken, our lives would be taken too! Our ancestors have left us with this trust. We are here to defend our generation. And we'll do it'.*

The presence of the Cretan priests who promised to celebrate mass in front of the museum was equally impressive.<sup>23</sup> *"I was told that the main street of the city turned black because of the cassocks! ("I platia strata ehi mavrisi apo to rasso!") And it was true! ...They arrived at the square... More and more of them were coming, it was a procession without end. That immense flow of priests! From the whole region! Even from other counties..."* The priests joined the demonstrators in the occupation of the museum's space, again affirming the symbolic unity of Christianity with the nation's values. In any case, it was not the first time that the Cretan church, basically its priests, declared their progressive ideas contrary to the traditionally conservative character of the Greek clergy.

---

<sup>23</sup> Local newspaper "I Allagi", 7-3-79: 4.

Finally, the government's decision to repress the upheaval found the policemen and the riot police (M.A.T.) in an awkward position. Although their task was to keep public order and facilitate the government's decisions, they ended up face to face with unexpected calls to join the demonstrators. The policemen were invited not to "*hurt their brothers*" and to join them in their fair protest. "*The museum belonged to them as well*" but the government "*gave them a uniform*" and forced them to be on the "*wrong side*", says Xanthaki trying to isolate a genuine Cretan attitude to the past hidden behind "misled" civil servants.

### **-Explaining them**

The participation of Cretan people in the protest was impressive and massive; to such an extent that for some years it seems that the sentence "A second museum rebellion will occur" ("*Tha gini to deftero moussio*") was in use in Heraklion.<sup>24</sup> Although in the meantime the political situation had radically changed and the Socialist Party ("PASOK") in 1981 took power from the rightwing "Nea Demokratia" for the first time, the phrase indicated a huge and successful resistance movement against the policy of the central government.

Contrary to the perception of museum heritage as a static and neutral entity, in this case the Minoan antiquities functioned as an "anti-museum of memory" (de Certeau 1984: 108). In the most lively way, they aroused feelings and memories of belonging to a place, the ancient history of which was, nevertheless, only superficially known. As the then mayor of Heraklion told me in a personal communication, "*It may seem incredible to us today but for no other reason in the history of this island have so many people united to protest against a government's decision. Bear in mind that this decision did not regard people's economic interests but the future of some antiquities*".

These events also revealed people's general lack of confidence in the institutions and authorities involved. One of the main arguments against the participation of Greece

---

<sup>24</sup> See the local newspaper "Tolmi", 11-7-87: 5.

in the exhibitions abroad was the much-discussed lack of safety of the exhibits, about which everybody seemed to be convinced. Besides, the suspicion of the foreign museums was also very strong. Cretans feared that the museums hosting the exhibitions could forge the originals and return forgeries instead of the “treasures” to Greece:

*We could take the forgeries as the originals! The techniques are so advanced nowadays that they could launch the forgery as authentic! We can never be sure! That's what I said [i.e., to those in Athens that insisted that such a forgery was not possible]: 'No matter what, we are very skeptical. We won't let our antiquities go; we should stay there until we die! Then you will put our bodies in these sarcophagi!'*

Again, the protesters' bodies were identified with the Minoan objects. In her work on the Athenian Acropolis, Eleana Yalouri has argued that the monument often functions as a metaphor for the Greek national body, especially in periods and cases of crisis (2001, cf. Handler 1988). In the Cretan narrations of the 1979 events, protesters and antiquities appear as physically “condemned”. Both were in danger because of the state's superficial and “criminal” policy in its attempt to flatter Western countries.

The identification of the protesters with the physical future of the antiquities was projected as an important “lesson” to the government. In effect, the Cretan reactions exemplified the stance that the Greek state should have had towards the protection of the country's heritage. As Hamilakis and Yalouri (1996: 126, cf. Herzfeld 1997: 22) have noted, Cretans resisted the hegemonic practices of the state by using the same elements of the state's discourse, i.e., those regarding the great significance of their ancient heritage.

This efficient appropriation of the national rhetoric in front of which the government found itself discursively unprepared and embarrassed can be considered as a special form of social action moving between what de Certeau (1984) called *strategies* and *tactics*. While strategies regard institutions and individuals with recognised status and power and operate through dominant discourses, tactics are the calculated actions of people lacking power, “play(ed) on and with a terrain imposed” by a

dominant discourse (ibid: 37). During specific “conjunctural operations” (ibid: 20), i.e., in temporary circumstances of changing conditions, people take advantage of the them and attempt to seize the opportunity to reach their goals. The museum events in 1979 occurred during such a “conjunctural operation” but one in which institutions and people with authority and power were also deeply and massively involved making the borders between those with and those lacking power very blurred, whereas the distinction between the local and the national as well as between the local and the global were much more obvious. Perhaps this mixed and massive character of the rebellion made it something more than the momentary action of “tactics”. During those days, a new discourse was produced, that of the Cretans protecting their past against the will of national and international forces, and as such it is still remembered.

Moreover, the protests highlighted and projected the distinctiveness of Crete compared to other places of Greece. The Minoan exhibits objectified the special character of the place and therefore its people: in the rest of the country the opposition to the transportation of antiquities abroad was of minor or insignificant extent and only in Crete did the issue cause such an upheaval. Mrs Xanthaki explained:

*We didn't care what other people did! We cared about **our** place. Is there any other necklace like **ours**?<sup>25</sup> No. Could they keep it and give us back a forgery? It wouldn't be that difficult; that's why we had to support the revolt. (Her emphasis)*

Yet one wonders how the political situation of that period, characterised by sharp ideological differences between Leftwing and Rightwing influenced the participants. Despite the first spontaneous answer that there was no political or party interest behind the protests, Maria Xanthaki, who has constantly supported the communist party like many other citizens of Archanes (see below chapter 6), mentioned that the conservative party, then in power, proved to be uninterested in the ancient heritage of the island but simply wanted to use it as a political advantage in international

---

<sup>25</sup> Xanthaki refers here to a famous Minoan necklace found in Archanes.

diplomacy. “*Perhaps some of the participants had this [i.e., this negative judgment about the conservative government] in the back of their minds but they never expressed it openly*”, the then mayor of Heraklion Manolis Karellis confessed. The same view was maintained by Rodoussakis, who was also actively involved in the events. For Greece it was a time of clear-cut distinctions between right and left ideologies, and unspoken differences perhaps played some role during the revolt, in which, however, members from all parties, including the Rightwing, took part.

The local surpassed the national in full emotional involvement and blurred for a while the then very sharp ideological differences and strong party loyalties. Mrs Xanthaki emphasises:

*I repeat that struggle did not aim at taking any political advantage. All parties were united like [the fingers of] a fist (“mia grothia”). The starting point was our ancient past, our origins; we felt that they were taking away things that belonged to our grandfathers. It’s so difficult to describe people’s feelings. You should see old women hanging from the railing of the museum and shouting ‘We won’t let them go! We shall give them to our children and grandchildren!’ It looked like an ancient tragedy; it was something that could never happen again...*

### **-Changed mentalities in a globalised world: Antiquities travelling in exhibitions abroad**

In fact, it never happened again. In 2001 two European museums, the Archaeological Museum of Karlsruhe in Germany and the Capitol Museum in Rome organised two exhibitions in which they included a great number of Minoan objects, on loan from several Cretan museums.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, the German exhibition was dedicated exclusively to Minoan civilisation and received great publicity on the island. Although the

<sup>26</sup> “Im Labyrinth des Minos. Kreta –die erste europäische Hochkultur” (In the Labyrinth of Minos. Crete: The First High European Civilisation). Badisches Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe, 27-1 to 29-4-2001. “Sulle Rotte di Omero. Navigatori e Commerci nel Mediterraneo Orientale, XVI-VI secolo a. C.” (Sailing with Homer: Sailors and Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean, 16<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC), Palazzo Caffarelli, 25-1 to 29-4-2001.

German curators were slightly concerned about possible difficulties, being aware of the events in 1979,<sup>27</sup> apart from a rather minor incident concerning some objects thought to be the fruit of illegal excavations,<sup>28</sup> no public reaction against the exhibition was triggered in Crete. Obviously safety regulations in the transport of antiquities have greatly improved compared to the late 1970s. Nevertheless, what has basically changed since then is that the flow of antiquities and works of art is much more tolerated or even supported than ever before. In the last ten years, several glossy exhibitions have taken place in the context of mutual loans between Greek and foreign museums. Exchange and movement of people, ideas and goods (cultural goods included) seem to be implied by the imperative rules of a globalised system in which most people, including, of course, archaeologists, visit Greek exhibitions displaying foreign works of art, while they understand and recognise as logical the claim of a foreign museum to receive some Greek antiquities on loan temporarily.

Yet this exchange is still not accepted by all Cretans without objections. Older people, especially those who took part in the 1979 protests doubt the necessity of these initiatives. Rodoussakis, although not against temporary loans among museums, believes that the island's masterpieces should not be included. Xanthaki, on the other hand, argues that antiquities should stay "at home" for a basic reason: they are *inseparable* from a place's culture.<sup>29</sup> She explains to me:

*-Foreigners come here to see the antiquities and at the same time they also see our people, our mentality, our customs. Our antiquities have become a "lottery", a thing travelling from one place to another ("ki afto to kanoun ena rempelo pragma pou girisi, pos na to po, mia*

---

<sup>27</sup> Personal communication with Katarina Horst, Curator at the Badisches Landesmuseum of Karlsruhe.

<sup>28</sup> Newspaper "Eleftherotipia", 6-6-2001, [www.enet.gr](http://www.enet.gr), acc. 13/12/2006.

<sup>29</sup> Related to this amalgamation of place and culture, when these lines were first written (December 2004), the Herakliote society was involved in the acquisition of a painting by El Greco auctioned at Christie's, London. Although, El Greco spent most of his life in Venice and then in Toledo, Spain where he produced his famous masterpieces, in Crete he is considered an "ecumenical Cretan" who brought the values of his land to Renaissance Europe. In order to bring the painter "back to his home", Cretans donated the entire amount and the painting was bought by the Local Council of Heraklion and put on display in the Historical Museum of the city.

*lotaria") OK, we have pulled down all borders, people get in and out as they like. What are we keeping? This is a moral issue.*

*Esther: But don't you think that exchange of cultural goods is a positive thing?*

*-It is! But not the exchange of treasures! In the final analysis, what is globalisation about? Does it mean: 'I give you my antiquities; will you give me your paintings?' Shall we liquidate our capital in this way?*

The current theme of globalisation arises in connection to an event which occurred 25 years ago. The lady gives substance and meaning to her past action by making it relevant to current debates on identity loss as a consequence of the cultural values of globalisation. In a probably unconscious use of Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital (1977, 1993), the liquidation of Cretan capital is a threatening perspective. The "blurring" of each local culture's special character seems even more aggravated by the exchange of treasures between two, otherwise, distinctive areas, the Greek and the West-European. Keeping the Minoan material culture of Crete affixed to its land and physically stable on the Cretan territory consolidates the meaning of local culture and offers a weapon against what is perceived as the flattening cultural homogeneity of our times. Locality is important first of all, in its physical, material and tangible terms and it remains such even for those Cretans who accept the mutual exchange of exhibitions, under of course, the guarantee of fair collaboration with countries that possess equally celebrated collections in their museums.



#### **IV. “US AND THEM”: HISTORICAL COMPARISONS WITHIN THE GAME OF IDENTITY POLITICS**

*All peoples have drawn upon Crete. What is really upsetting is that they appear as if they had invented everything themselves. And they don't say 'folks, we got all that from Crete'.*

*[...]*

*We know that King Minos used to go to Mt Ida to receive the laws from his father, Zeus, every nine years. Compared to Moses, who went only once to get the Ten Commandments, we see that there is a great plagiarism of the Cretan tradition. There was no renewal and updating of the laws. Therefore, how can the Jewish state progress if you compare it to the Cretan and, subsequently, the Greek state?*  
(Avgerinos)

All through the previous sections of the chapter, it became obvious how the multiple perceptions of Minoan material culture underpin local discourses about the importance or even the cultural uniqueness of the island. Yet these same ideas also serve as a rhetorical basis for the differentiation of the island from other places and other people. According to attempts to consolidate, legitimate, subvert or improve their present political and cultural reality, Cretans tend to connect or disconnect their past to and from the present as they build their smooth or troublesome relations with the rest of the country or with other nations. As Connerton has put it, “We will experience our present differently in accordance with the different pasts to which we are able to connect that present” (1989: 2).

Thus the importance of the local past, around which Cretan identity is symbolically constructed, is often drawn upon comparisons made to other cultures known for their achievements. The opening quote by Avgerinos is indicative in this respect. Moses, the archetypal biblical figure who introduced a basic law system into the errant Jewish population after its exodus from Egyptian slavery is compared to King

Minos. Contrary to Moses, Minos consulted his father Zeus every nine years as long as the laws of Cretan society had to be regularly revised in order to face the social changes brought with time. The primacy of the Cretan myth is obvious in respect to the legal heritage of the Ten Commandments, which have remained unrevised (by God) since biblical times. Cultural authorship is again at stake: Cretans invented the concept of the divinely-given law first, differently from what most people believe about the prevalence of Jews in establishing a basic law system. And the Jewish state, given the assumed direct dependence of the present to the past, could not have progressed like the Greek states of antiquity, those that later “produced” the classical Greek civilisation.

However, neither the classical works on which Greece has based a great many of its modern image are left always uncontested. As has been mentioned several times thus far, for Cretans the Minoan past is undoubtedly the origin and foundation of the classical civilisation developed in mainland Greece hundreds of years after the archaeologically defined “end” of the Minoan culture. Yet, in some cases, the Minoan world is not seen as the forerunner of the Greek world but it is set *against* classical antiquity. Then the two most characteristic monuments of those periods, the Acropolis of Athens and Knossos are compared. Avgerinos epitomises the cultural prevalence of Knossos as follows:

*I don't think that anyone in Crete finds the Acropolis greater than a Minoan sanctuary or even a [Minoan] storage jar. We should not forget that 200,000 slaves built the Acropolis, and this should be an embarrassing building. Athenians were rich because of their colonies and put their slaves to build. Is this a civilisation? In a city with walls all around?*

*The Parthenon is imposed on the rest of Greece. A Cretan identifies Crete with Knossos but not necessarily with the Parthenon. I'm telling you, if you know history you can even reject the Parthenon. What kind of civilisation did the Athenians have with their 200,000 slaves to serve a minority of 10-15,000 citizens? There was no community of goods and no joint ownership there. Why should I be jealous of Athens? Why should I turn to the daughter and not to her mother?*

*Here is the “motherland”... Athens was then what New York is today...*

These words bring to light a recurrent theme, the unequally balanced relationship between centre and periphery all around the country. The comparison of the two monuments' importance alludes to the implicit antagonism between Crete and Athens. Undoubtedly, Crete is not the only Greek region competing with Athens for acknowledgement of its needs; neither is it unique in complaining of neglect by the Athens-based or otherwise called “Athens-centric” (“athinokentriko”) Greek state. It seems, however, that this contradictory relationship, on the one hand, belonging wholeheartedly to Greece and on the other, blaming the central government for “anti-cretism” (“antikritismos”), sometimes finds its expression in the confrontation of these major pasts, the Minoan and the Classical. The primacy given locally to Minoan works in relation to classical heritage constitutes a challenge of the present social order and can be understood not simply as an expression of a strong local identity but also as a quest for recognition of the Cretan particularities on a national level.

### **- Local (Cretan) – Global**

The likening of classical Athens to modern New York is a rather common historical comparison in popular discussions on Greek antiquity. The democracy of and for only a segment of the Athenian society, the employed “imperialist” strategies and the grounding of the “democrats” welfare on the exploitation of foreign peoples are the discursive arguments of the link between these two so distant (culturally and chronologically) examples. These features are placed opposite to those attributed to Minoan Crete; then, the local is contrasted with the national and the global through binary oppositions between Minoan and classical antiquity, in the following diagrammatic way:

Minoan Crete – Classical Athens

Community of goods – Slavery

Humanist ideals – Exploitation of the weak

Free unfortified Minoan societies – Fortified Classical cities

“True” civilisation – Elitist domination via the subordination of the poor

As a result, even the negative, neo-colonialist features ascribed to the US and other countries of the Western world can be seen as opposed to the character of Minoan society. Such historical beliefs are rhetorically entangled in many local discourses with which Cretans express their opposition to Western political attitudes and neo-colonialist paradigms. In these cases, the peaceful, egalitarian and “truly civilised” Minoan Crete offers a historical paradigm which can be used to support or insinuate heterogeneous political positions and alliances in the present.

Let us examine an example in which the Minoan culture was used as a relevant argument. In 1986, a minor quarrel concerning security issues took place between Cretans and Americans at the airport of Heraklion. According to the local media, American officials who were not satisfied with the security procedures showed conspicuous arrogance towards Cretan security people. The fact caused anger and resentment and was associated with the political role of the US towards “weak” countries. On the same day, another American official visited Knossos and sat on the so-called “Throne of Minos”, a privilege enjoyed only by important visitors, mainly foreign leaders and politicians. His visit was covered by the local media and the picture of the “proud” official sitting on the Throne was published in Cretan newspapers. The temporal coincidence of these two very different attitudes – the former showing disrespect to Cretan people whereas the latter adequately acknowledging Cretan hospitality – encouraged a local newspaper to present the two otherwise unrelated episodes together, under the following title: *“An American officer sits proudly on the Throne of Minos at Knossos. A few hours earlier compatriots of his disrupted the concept of national independence in all senses”*.<sup>30</sup> Through the shared presentation of the episodes, the newspaper made a foreign official’s intolerable behaviour evident and at the same time it “applauded” the official that showed the correct attitude towards the culturally (but politically unlike the Americans) rich people of Crete. The “powerful Other”, whoever he might be, should show more consideration for Crete.

---

<sup>30</sup> Local newspaper “Tolmi”, 21/11/86: 1.

The same game is played in many occasions. In 2001, English tourists who appeared offensive and bad-mannered during their visit to Knossos were arrested by the local police after a call made by the site's guards. Similarly, in the same year, the proposal by an Israeli businessman to reconstruct the palace of Knossos in a tourist theme park was presented by the local media and the Herakliote authorities as an inappropriate, almost vulgar, foreign attempt to "disneyfy" the Minoan heritage.

To summarise, the Minoan past is a symbolic source of power and resistance against a wealthy, powerful but "culturally disadvantaged" Other. Its relevance appears particularly opportune when the latter proves unable to appreciate the island's culture and identity. The ideological use of Minoan antiquities repeats here, albeit in a more complicated way, what Herzfeld (1987: 18) calls the "predicament of being Greek". As he argues, "some Greeks, some of the time, claim a European identity that other Greeks claim they have either never attained or never desired. Greeks thus live out the tension between similarity and difference, or inclusion and exclusion..." (ibid.). Paraphrasing, it can be argued that "the predicament of being Cretan", causes even more tension and complexity: Cretan people tend to notice similarities and differences not only between themselves and the other Greeks but also between themselves and foreign nations. Their views are embedded in associations and dissociations characterising the Minoan and the European or the Minoan and the classical Greek (especially when Crete is promoted as the forerunner of all subsequent achievements, e.g., in the above comparison of Knossos to the Parthenon). Minoan culture offers then a field where social relations revealing alliances and differentiations of Crete can be played out, while the island shapes its aspired position in the national and the global arenas.

## **2. THE MINOAN PAST AS A SHARED RESOURCE OF HUMANISTIC VALUES**

### **I. “MINOAN LESSONS”**

Having dealt with the role of the Minoan past in some aspects of Cretan identity, in the second part of this chapter, we explore some different social fields in which archaeological knowledge is implicated. The esoteric discourses about Minoan spirituality, the values attributed to the Minoan way of life and some of the feminist and “new age” ideas existing on the island –, inspired by the assumed role of women in Minoan society – are examined.

For many people or groups of people who live on the island, Minoan Crete constitutes an example of a model society which, in some respects, was better than the contemporary. The island’s Bronze Age culture stands for a series of principles that modern societies, both in Greece and abroad, fail to follow. What are these principles and what are the relevant discourses formulated locally?

Like many of the tourists I interviewed, most of my Cretan informants emphasised the didactic significance of the Minoans’ well-balanced relationship with the natural environment. This view, however, acquires greater discursive importance when it is associated with broader social ideals or an overall moral attitude to life. In these cases, observing nature means more than an ecologically oriented lifestyle. It is a process that brings knowledge, wisdom and a different, more in-depth way of looking at things which has universal and not specifically local connotations. Kostas Rodoussakis enthusiastically shares these ideas and his words are particularly interesting because three different identities are encountered in his remarks: that of a cosmopolitan architect, that of a Cretan citizen and that of a passionate amateur of history and philosophy.

The main axis of this type of thinking regards Knossos as a successful combination of a natural, a constructed and a philosophical “landscape”. It was the thorough and

age-long examination of the surrounding environment, Kostas argues, that stimulated the Minoans to translate the world into geometrical forms, such as the circle, the eight-shaped motif and that of the double-axe, which later acquired a special symbolic meaning through time:

*Have you ever seen two joined apricots? They form the eight-motif. Have you seen a little octopus moving? It forms a curve, then another, and all together, the same eight-motif. [...] They [i.e., the Minoans] knew that all thoughts, when translated into words or into objects, make people contemplate. For example, they knew the right dates to cut down the trees to build their columns. If you cut them down on the wrong days the trunks will rot away; otherwise, they can last for ages. [...]*

*Their knowledge derived from observation. They observed the whole natural process, even a small flame or the veins of a vine leaf... Then they brought their remarks to their architecture, their way of life, everywhere... Think, for example, of the bull-leaping. To make this movement, to jump and catch the bull and then jump forward, all of this is a study of human movement and of every single detail of it...*

In these geometrical motifs the Minoans encapsulated their philosophical and ontological thinking rendering these motifs into broader cosmological symbols: “*The circle is the fairest of all shapes; it has got equal distances from one point; it is all a dialectical process... The eight-shaped motif is the fountain of all symbols: it is the perfect repetition... And the space left above and below the Minoan eight-shaped shield forms a double axe*”, Kostas maintains, and he makes endless drawings by which he explains, his views about an evolutionary generation of symbols. For him though, the greatest Minoan invention was that of the curved line, first encountered in the fruits of the Cretan trees and subsequently in the Minoan people’s designs and decorations. He associates the use of curve with an existential search, that of the meaning of time:

*“The evolution of time cannot be depicted with a linear scheme but with a curve. Look here: I start, I grow up, I build on this, I become knowledgeable, I reach the top; then I start moving to the other side, to the end: death is a certainty”.*

This is the most didactic meaning gathered from the Minoan observations: the search for the individual's role in the system. Man puts himself at the focus of his research, tries to better understand his role and his position in the world because, the architect argues,

*in order to understand what is going on one has to keep a distance from the current reality. Things and people look different from above [and] that's why the Minoans loved places at high altitudes and made their sanctuaries on peaks...they knew that they were perishable, they had studied and understood nature; they were aware of the fact that the earth around them was made by millions of other people. That's why they were concerned to depict all that in symbols...*

Rodoussakis's ideas on the generation of Minoan symbols, so alien to archaeological theories and treatises, are heard on the island, on different occasions. Cretans and other people living in Crete often associate these symbols with broader philosophical and personal searches. A man who has received very little education, working as guard at a minor archaeological site in the Herakliote countryside, told me how naïf he felt when he realised that the labyrinth *“was not a real building but an allegory of man's need to discover his inner self”*. A lady whom I often saw wearing a necklace with a small golden double-axe, the dominant Minoan religious symbol, explained that for her this is the symbol of eternal harmony and balance of things, an idea that will be further discussed in the following sections of this chapter.

The commonest reference to the importance of the Minoan world is made in the form of advice: by looking back to Bronze Age Crete we can learn something about ourselves and then try to improve our own society. The children of the primary school whom I interviewed at the end of their school year said unanimously that we have to teach ourselves from the Minoan ancestors and live, like them, in a society



without wars. During that year (2001-2002), through the history lessons, the “Minoan” theatre plays organised for them by their teacher and the visits to the site which is located only a few hundred meters from their school, Knossos became an exemplary model of social organisation.

Moreover, Avgerinos, who goes so far as to talk about “the morality of the Minoan laws” seen as a first form of socialism thousands of years before the teachings of Jesus, explains that it was his study of the Minoans that has encouraged him to live “in a more human way”. This knowledge of the past gave him confidence to return to, restore and revive his tiny abandoned village. There he brought up his children with the principles that such a study can reveal to modern people and especially to Cretans.

Actually, the need to teach ourselves from the Minoans, as the children and the other informants put it, arises from the comparisons people make to their current living conditions. Thus the praising of Minoan architecture, for example, comes as a point of reference contrasted to “monster-cities” (*“polis-terata”*), such as Heraklion, which, unlike Knossos, have overtly ignored basic human needs as well as the principles of a nature-friendly architecture or conformity with the landscape.

Most of my informants agree that the reason for this unsatisfactory current situation is nothing else but the pursuit of money. In a kind of a cause-effect relationship, the lack of respect for “natural rules” is seen as the direct consequence of people’s insatiable desire for economic growth and wealth. “Monster-cities” for instance, are the result of massive tourism, an activity expanded at the expense of beauty, harmony, and civility. Respecting nature means knowledge, wisdom, and a conscious way of life, which, in Mrs Houlaki’s words, does not permit “*the transgression of a moderated balance*” (*“tin katastratigisi tou metrou”*).

To my remark that in Bronze Age Crete, especially in the palatial centres, there was accumulated wealth and huge amounts of stored and luxurious products, evidence on which the archaeologists assume the existence of a powerful elite, most informants clearly differentiated Minoan prosperity from the meaning that money has in our societies. At those times, “*commercial and cultural development were in accordance*

*and not in conflict as happens today*", asserts Avgerinos, and Mary Houlaki interprets the abundant presence of gold in Minoan Knossos not as a sign of opulence but as an expression of cultural sophistication which did not eliminate people's harmonious contact with the world.

## **II. GENDERED DISCOURSES:**

### **MINOAN CRETE AS A MODEL OF EQUALITY AND PARTNERSHIP**

*[Minoan] women took part in all public manifestation as emancipated women... They were not lower in status than men, as occurred among other ancient or modern neighbouring peoples.*

From the book *The Cretan Woman, Yesterday and Today* (2003: 37)  
by the local researcher G. Panayiotakis.

At first sight, the perceived importance of women in the Minoan society is brought to bear in the present of Crete through a variety of images and names used as emblems of women's organisations. The names of Ariadne and Knossos, the figure of "The Parisienne" (from one of the best-known frescoes unearthed and restored by Evans) and the famous "Snake Goddess" are some of them. The latter is the commonest Minoan object in relevant imagery, seen, since Evans's times, as emblematic of women's high position in Bronze Age Crete.

The Heraklion branch of the "Lionesses", i.e., the female counterpart of the "Lions" international society, is one among many organisations called "Knossos". Mary Paradaki, a Herakliote businesswoman dealing mainly with tourist enterprises and working also as volunteer for many women's charity organisations, is actively involved in it. She explains that the name "Knossos" was adopted because (in Greek) it is female and could convey an idea of the Cretan origin of the club's members. However, the idea of the (assumed) social equality between the two sexes in Minoan times was what determined not only the name but also the character of the Herakliote branch:

*Women at the times of Knossos had a significant position: they were important entities... [and] the deities were female... Men and women were equal, and this is what weighed most in our decision.*

The same starting point characterises the action of many feminist circles based in Heraklion. In summer 2002, the “Union of All Women’s Societies” of the region organised a series of cultural events under the general title “Ariadnean” in order to promote women’s contributions to Cretan culture across time. The activities were publicised through the image of the *Parisienne*, in an interesting link of the most typical archaeological find depicting a Minoan woman, to Ariadne, the mythological character (Fig. 60). The activities included talks, shows and exhibitions, all dealing with female action on Crete in the time span from antiquity to the present time, women’s involvement in several social and professional fields and their relationship to politics and the arts.

For the opening evening, which was dedicated to female voluntary work, the ladies of the organising committee had commissioned a show about the escape of Ariadne and Theseus, first from the Labyrinth and then from Crete. How important was the symbolic association of Ariadne with contemporary women’s action? Mrs Paradaki, who was a member of the committee, explains that the show illuminated the significance of the female presence in Crete with Ariadne standing at its outset. The committee deemed the mythological figure and the image of the *Parisienne* as the symbolic archetypes of the Cretan woman. It was the admirable action of the “Minoitissa” (Minoan woman) that was later expanded all over Greece and then to the rest of world:

*We wanted to show the story of a woman confined to a limited space. Ariadne was happy at Knossos; but she wanted to get out of it, outside her golden cage. She wanted to see what the world beyond the sea looked like. So she dared to go away. It was a daring act to help Theseus and go against some local laws and principles.*

Yet the employment of such ideas about the relations between men and women in Minoan Crete do not stop at the selection of relevant names and imagery for similar cultural activities. The concepts of Minoan equality between the two sexes, or in some cases that of an assumed Minoan matriarchy, work as a valuable example of social relations which deserve to be repeated in the present:

*Thousands of years ago, at the times of Knossos, women enjoyed a very high social position. Perhaps it was a matriarchal period, we can't be sure of that. What we wanted to emphasise is that it was the collaboration between women and men that led to that magnificent civilisation. Our message was that when there is equality, the results can be excellent...*

The Cretan feminist discourse has only developed in Crete in an activist form during the last twenty years. However, the cultivation of links with the ancient past, aided by archaeological theories about women's role in Minoan times, has paved the path for the expansion of local feminist societies. In 1992, the "First International Congress on Minoan Partnership" was organised in Heraklion with the participation of archaeologists and members of Cretan and international women's organisations. The "Minoan model" was then presented as the only hope to return to a less hierarchical society of peace, happiness, creativity and true partnership.

In fact, such local action has been strengthened through affinities with international feminist movements struggling for partnership, established worldwide in the 1980s and 1990s. Based on a selective use of archaeological theories drawn mainly on the archaeologist Marija Gimbutas, who analysed the role of women in prehistory (1982), these movements claim that the Minoans were the last in an ancient sequence of people who worshipped female deities and their societies were based on the sensitivity and intelligence of the female personality. The peaceful Minoan social system, which relied on the social and religious significance of the "Mother Goddess", came to an end when the Mycenaeans arrived in Crete. With their weapons, their male deities and new social hierarchy, the Mycenaeans gradually repressed the Minoan ideals signifying "the end of innocence" for humanity.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> These ideas are most clearly presented in the book by Riane Eisler *The Chalice and the Blade* published in the United States in 1987. Eisler offers her own explanation of global historical evolution, starting with the societies "of the chalice" (i.e., the drinking cup of the Mother Goddess whom people in prehistoric times worshipped in Crete and elsewhere). In these societies, women, religion and the wisdom gained from the natural world were in absolute agreement with each other until the time they came to be dominated by "the societies of the blade", in which a warlike, androcentric and hierarchical social organisation was imposed. This theory is exemplified by using a huge variety of information ranging from philosophy, psychology to anthropology and, of course, archaeology. Eisler's book was translated into Greek in 1992 and since then it has enjoyed a special place in local feminist discourses. Once again, as has been noted on several occasions thus far,

For the international and Greek groups alike in the pursuit of partnership and new social roles for women, history serves as a basis of “analogic thinking” (see Sutton 1998: 119, cf. Tilley 2002: 25). If things went so well in the past because of the equality between the two sexes, why can’t the same condition of harmonious and equal roles between men and women apply today in order to develop and improve our own society as well? This kind of thinking works here as a moral argument:

*[Nowadays] women are not used to daring...that’s why we dedicated one evening to Cretan women politicians. The Minoan society is a brilliant paradigm that women and men in cooperation can create and enjoy a perfect society. ...There is no similar example of such a high civilisation in men-led societies. The Minoans offer inspiration to us and we hope that at least a few other people can follow their example...*

Mrs Paradaki’s views combine several layers of meaning. Undoubtedly, her opinions are mixed with feelings of belongingness to Crete (“*Alas! We have our own history; we did not fall to earth from heaven!*”) At the same time, as a modern, successful and educated woman she wishes to communicate to her fellow Cretan women the meaning of *their* past. She and her Herakliote circle, also inspired by wider international feminist movements, propose the Minoan model as a source of inspiration and a guide for a better future for both men and women, Cretan or not, and bring modern Cretan women into current re-workings of local history.

---

official archaeological knowledge, political trends and popular conceptualisations of the past are far from unrelated to each other: the book is accompanied by the positive comments of renowned Greek archaeologists and a preface written by Margaret Papandreou, wife of the former socialist Prime Minister of Greece, and leading figure in the women’s organisations of the country.

### **III. “SACRED” KNOSSOS: METAPHYSICAL AND ESOTERIC USES**

The grounding of the Minoan love for life, peace and partnership in an etiology evolved around the worship of “Mother Goddess” is what connects the feminist discourses on Crete with the esoteric uses of the archaeological information. Ideas about the meaning of religious practices and beliefs in Minoan Crete acquire a broader cosmological character, associated to or dissociated from both official archaeological positions and local discourses on Cretanness accordingly.

One example of selective combination of such interrelated narratives is the already mentioned “Sacred drama: A Minoan ritual” that was put on by the Heraklion annex of the *Lyceum of Greek Women*. Working for the Lyceum, the choreographer of the “drama”, Mary Houlaki, has clearly drawn on the cultural politics of the hosting institution as mentioned above (chapter 2). The Cretan background of the revived ritual, the respectful formal style of the production, the sense of historical continuity between Minoan, classical Greek and recent cultural traditions of Crete are all clearly noticeable.

Nevertheless, through her choreography she also communicated her more personal views on the role of spiritual improvement through meditation and self-concentration. The lady attempted to give to the audience as well as to the young dancers of the Lyceum the message of inner search inspired by her – and other people’s – views on the mystical character of Minoan religion and its actuality. The Minoans were aiming at a superior state of self-consciousness, at least during their rituals; it is this state that we should try to grasp.

Yet what are the characteristics of the Minoan religion, which, according to these views, should influence positively our attitudes towards spiritual acquaintance?

*The Minoans when participating in the various [religious] ceremonies were probably in a special condition of existence; maybe they surpassed the human condition... The human brain has the ability to*

*bring the body to a similar condition. [...] When I was 16-17 years old I used to go to Knossos and there I could find this deep silence [I was looking for], like in a small chapel. Knossos is sacred not only because the Minoans were very religious but also because it was, perhaps, a site of initiation, like a monastery...*

The link of the archaeological site and the years of youth to the silence and the devoutness felt in a small chapel away from crowds and the formalities of standard Christian practices invest Knossos with a peculiar sacredness. As Yalouri (2001, also Hamilakis and Yalouri 2000) has argued, antiquities in Greece, especially its important national symbols such as the “sacred rock” of the Acropolis, are often given religious connotations within the nationalist imagining of the country’s past. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the combination of Cretan Orthodox traditions with the Minoan antiquity is not rare in local discourses, and Knossos is undoubtedly part of the same local imagining of antiquity. Here, however, the monument is seen as sacred also due to the current meaning attributed to the Minoan religion. Relevant archaeological knowledge, mingled with theories about Minoan art and social organisation, invites us, according to people interested in Minoan spirituality, to discover the deeper meaning of this past and leave behind any superficiality.

In effect, learning from the Minoan religion is seen as a kind of personal initiation. On the one hand, archaeological evidence of Minoan religious ceremonies, such as scenes depicted on frescoes and seals, and on the other hand, books suggesting the function of Knossos as a kind of monastery (see, e.g., Castleden 1990) provide the main source of inspiration as well as a strong foundation for the esoteric use of Minoan elements in a variety of contexts.

*The material culture of the Minoans, especially their highly appreciated works of art, is indicative of this superior spiritual status of the Minoan culture. For example, the seals and the miniatures; you cannot produce such an art if you don’t feel this inner purity... You cannot reach this height if you don’t bring yourself to a condition of purity and spiritual sophistication. [...]*



*The libation vase (rhyton) of the bull<sup>32</sup> from Knossos is such an example. Think that in those times people did not have lenses and glasses. How did they make the miniature seals and other very fine artworks? When you reach this situation of inner silence, you feel that you can see better. What do we mean when we say, “a work of art can speak for itself”? It’s not that it gives you information but that it can bring you to another dimension, something absolute. If the artist is close to this feeling, his creation becomes universal.*

In such views the aesthetic features of Minoan material culture acquire a moral significance. The related technical sophistication of Minoan objects is explained in the context of the philosophical and spiritual searches of the ancient Cretan craftsmen and a close examination of their works invites us to share and follow their spiritual meanings.

### **-Minoan worship and its relation to other cultures**

By drawing parallels between the cultures of Minoan Crete and the East, especially India, Mrs Houlaki discovers some relevant similarities. For example the female body position with the raised hands, typical of almost all dances of the “Ritual” is present not only in Minoan visual compositions (frescoes, seals, statuettes) but also in many Indian dances. *“It is one of the five Indian sacred positions. It is called “pataka” and it is also encountered in some of the representations of Jesus in Christian iconography. These are holy gestures which seem to be related to the human archetypes”,* she asserts. Relying on this universality of people’s spiritual and religious dispositions, and the similarities found between Minoan culture and Sanskrit texts, she intentionally added some Indian elements to the show.

Moreover, the choreographer notices the resemblance of the features and the elegance of the Minoan and the traditional Indian dress, while she maintains that *“in India you will find the roots of several peoples. Even the Aryans started from there”*.

---

<sup>32</sup> That is, in the form of a bull. The lady refers to one of the most famous luxury objects found at Knossos.

She also notes that a message of spiritual purity similar to the Minoan can be found in religions, philosophies and sacred books as different as the Indian texts, St Paul's letters, in Sufism, in Zen, in the philosophy of Plato and in Buddhism. The death of the gods, their mourning and later their resurrection, which occurs at the end of the show *"features in several religions: in Christianity, in messianic Judaism...in the words of King Solomon and King David, in Tibet, in India, etc."*

Mary Houlaki essentially uses her knowledge on Minoan Crete combined with other philosophical and religious attitudes, yet without losing the coherence of her Minoan references. Her goal is not to revive a religious act of the past or to offer accurate historical knowledge of the kind that an academic institution, such as a museum, would present to the public. Through the representation of a revived Minoan ritual ceremony, she draws selectively, as most artists do, on *some* of the existing archaeological information. She actually chooses what fits the occasion in order to talk about the value of mental purity through meditation and purification, achievable through a sincere worship of divine forces:

*The purest moments of a people are those of worship. Because what is worship all about? It's the contact with our inner self...we can place it [i.e., the divine force] on heaven or elsewhere in the universe...it doesn't matter. What matters is to feel it inside one's self. In those moments there is nothing outside ourselves and the object of our worship...*

*I want the members of the audience to experience what my dancers feel when they perform, some of this nearly ecstatic condition into which they bring themselves through this deep silence; to encounter their own selves ...This is a moment of self-consciousness, i.e., what becoming one with the universe quintessentially means...Whatever ritual ceremony you revive, what really matters is not the representation but the feeling this causes.*

This special feeling is what Dina, one of the young dancers of the show, described to me from another, simpler, point of view: *"After seven years of regular participation in the show, I feel that the value of this collective work is that you have to be mature*

*enough to express its message. Dancing for the Minoan ritual differs very much from a usual ballet: it requires a spiritual technique”, asserts the girl, combining her proud Cretan identity with a special artistic expression.*

**-The New Age meanings: trying to find a universal truth at the antipodes of decadent Western values**

The theoretical background of Mary Houlaki's choreography emphasises the significance of the sacred aspects of the Minoan culture, the study of which is encouraging and elevating and stimulates reflection on our own society:

*I wished to highlight the positive elements of a past period in order to contribute to the regeneration of our culture, which is collapsing...I wanted the “Minoan drama” to work as “an invigorating injection” to our era which seems to go back to the Middle Ages...What we experience in our every day lives is like a whirl – you must have felt this at the centre of Heraklion... Unlike the Minoans, we lack moments of inner silence, of inner immobility [...]And I think that the show was successful because it touched this side that we all still have inside us despite the fact that we don't realise it because of the existing alienation ...*

These views define Minoan Crete as ideal, in contrast to modern Crete or modern Western culture in general. Moreover, the purity of the highest cultural production of the Minoans is seen against their decadence that followed at the end of the Bronze Age. All of the above are due to moral corruption which is deemed as the main reason for the decadence and the eventual destruction of all civilisations: “*Look what happened in America with the Twin Towers*”, the lady says in order to give a similar example of a powerful but now dissolute nation. In this absolute opposition between good and bad, Minoan spirituality and some philosophical movements that originated in the East stand at the antipode of the gradual “annihilation” of the States, which supposedly started with the destruction of the Twin Towers.

The German painter Sophia Brandt, who lives and works in Heraklion, also finds similarities between Minoan and Eastern cultures, especially Buddhism, to which she feels close. Like many people involved in the Goddess movement, Sophia is also fascinated by what she calls “peacefulness of mind”. She considers respect for women, nature and animals a concern common among the ancient Minoans and the followers of Buddha. In her works, Sophia re-interprets Minoan civilisation by focusing on the importance of female forces. She also depicts archaeological finds side by side with objects and landscapes of modern Crete in an endless, almost surrealist, play of symbols, both Minoan and modern. She passionately talks about the hypocrisy of the Christian Church which she equates to the devil: in the name of which millions of people have been killed. Her works show the Minoan snakes in contrast to the Christian faith and a huge gap divides Minoan from Christian culture. Such an eco-feminist way of understanding the world is totally different from Western mentality, which she sees as responsible for the planet’s gradual devastation. *“Fortunately”, she says, “there are more and more nice people who love Mother-Earth and come back into this other kind of thinking... [...] These people are closer to the Minoans.”*

As for the feminist circles of Heraklion, the Minoan society was not patriarchally-structured while its welfare was based on the reverence shown for the great female divinity. However, Sophia’s new-age attitudes transcend narratives of Cretanness. Not because she is not Cretan; but mainly because, unlike most Cretan people, she rejects any notion of historical continuity from the past. For her, modern Cretans have learnt nothing from the Minoan inhabitants of their place. She also connects the enormous Cretan tourism industry, *“aiming only at the making of money”*, to the West, the source of environmental destruction. If we compare her words to Mrs Houlaki’s principles, it becomes obvious that the reasons for current moral corruption are the same: unlimited consumerism and neglect of spiritual development.

The same negative effects are also those noted by the women organisers of the *“Ariadnean”* series. Mary Paradaki endorses these views as they suit the role she pursues for Cretan women, despite the fact that, in her role as a Cretan feminist she does not need to turn to any metaphysical discourse. Her words with which I would

like to conclude this chapter, very clearly exemplify the actuality of “Minoan lessons” in the urgently needed endeavour to stop the effects of “eudemonism”:

*I think that we have to believe in the past of our place, to believe that we are the descendents of the Minoans. Why don't we follow their model and prefer the European models instead? The European values appeared much later. Their societies [i.e., the European] are very recent and have principles very different from ours.*

*We learn all these things [i.e., about the Minoans] only academically;<sup>33</sup> besides, very few people are interested in archaeological books. [...] We, Cretans, managed to enlighten others but we cannot enlighten our own society. If we allow others to talk on our behalf, then, I think, we are very miserable. We are proud because all these admirable things occurred in our place, but in essence we don't follow them, it's more convenient to forget them. Unfortunately, our mentality, mainly after the War,<sup>34</sup> is conditioned by this European eudemonism, the European lifestyle, and the high standards of a comfortable life. Perhaps in Crete it's like that because we went through poverty, difficulties, and occupations by foreign conquerors. So we now say: “No, our children won't go through what we did”<sup>35</sup> and we tend to forget our past; we are only interested in “being fine”. But we have to look backwards for a moment, to our past, to bring some of the Minoan examples into our reality. These things are not only academic knowledge but also an invitation, a challenge for the future.*

Stopping the effects of eudemonism should be primarily a Cretan task. The actuality of the Minoan lessons is to remind every Cretan of the possibility of re-enlightening his/her own society and following a fairer model of social organisation. Peace, equality, respect for women and the Earth, and related spiritual searches appeal for a

---

<sup>33</sup> She refers to the superficial knowledge people gain at school.

<sup>34</sup> The Second World War.

<sup>35</sup> That is, the same difficult living conditions.

way of life which lies at the opposite of a belated European modernity and its consequences.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

*The sense of the past, at any given point of time, is quite as much a matter of history  
as what happened in it; ...the two are indivisible.*

Samuel 1994: 15

This chapter, divided in two parts, focused mainly on six individuals who have been variously involved in the use of the Minoan past in the present. Each one of them expresses one or more aspects of historical consciousness regarding the Minoan antiquity and puts into words the operation of specific representations of and meanings attributed to Cretan ancient material culture as presented in chapter 2.

There are two different and at the same time interrelated narratives that can be distinguished in my informants' words concerning the current meaning of the Minoan past and the ways that this past may stimulate and justify current social action, experiences and attitudes. The first one refers to the construction of local identity through the reproduction of specific historical perceptions of the Minoan period in Crete; and the second, on the moral evaluation of the Minoan culture as a didactic and inspiring resource of values, especially when these are discursively compared to present-day practices.

As far as the first narrative is concerned, the local conceptualisations of the Minoan antiquity lie at the heart of what is called a "mapping process" (see Massey 1995b, Rose 1995, Leontis 1995), i.e., the ways in which a specific piece of land turns out to be the abstract concept of a homeland. Minoan artefacts serve as "substantial markers of a homeland [that] seem to affix culture to a place" (Leontis 1995: 2); hence they are often treated as collective material property. Moreover, through the Cretan appropriation of academic knowledge about ancient heritage, a particular type of local social memory is formulated. It seems that the Minoan past, although it goes back thousands of years, is collectively remembered as part of a lived local history which is enacted through visual, verbal and textual representations when necessary.

The archaeological remains of the Minoan times serve as a metaphor for local history and mythology, often making the two indistinguishable. They give substance to the remote Cretan Bronze Age history and objectify the perceived significance of the island diachronically.

The sense of Minoan history as the remembering of a common past is built mainly upon the evocation of continuities with it. The persistent reference to them reproduces, at first instance, the familiar national discourse of Greeks as cultural (or even biological) inheritors of the glorious ancient civilisation in their attempt to “fabricate” a steady identity and ascertain their position in the international scene as Europe wanted them in the nineteenth century. The Cretan claims for cultural or (much less frequently) racial sequence from the Minoans, then the Mycenaeans and finally the Dorians not only unite the tribes of antiquity in a single ancestral group but also efficiently link the established knowledge about ancient Greek civilisation to the land of Crete. Interestingly, this “hellenisation” of Minoan Cretans does not seem to follow any official archaeological writing of Cretan Bronze Age history. In spite of this fact, being thoroughly implicated in the Greek nation-state’s hierarchies of power and historical knowledge, archaeological information is used here to construct the Cretan version of the national master narrative on ethnic homogeneity and linear evolution. This particular reworking of history inevitably extends the classical miracle of mainland Greece to the real “cradle of civilisation”, i.e., Minoan Crete.

Undoubtedly, the interpretation of Minoan culture as encapsulating many of the recent traditions and customs of Crete is also inspired by the same nationalist orientation of Greek folkloric writing. Yet in practice, this approach goes beyond the consolidation of national consciousness in the Cretan territory. Minoan culture is invested in the everyday with a strong explanatory power. It justifies, illuminates, or accounts for personal habits and choices, collective tastes, personal artistic inspiration or even a broader moral attitude to life. In this way the past is made an active, almost embodied part of the present. Knowledge about Minoan heritage has come to signify a form of general local knowledge which, by being both dependent and differentiated from hegemonic discourses on Greekness, turns into an integral part of a specifically “Cretan way of looking at things”.



Seen as temporal reach for current practices in Crete, the Minoan past is also used by modern Cretans in order to approach other places and people and to negotiate their position. Many theorists have shown that places, like identities, are never static and fixed but are deeply engaged in the cause of agency and effects; they are “bundles of relations” (Tilley 2006: 21). Thus, Crete, as objectified in the social use of ancient material culture, defines and ceaselessly reshapes its relationship to both the national and the global, and in particular to the West. Yet this is far from an unambiguous process since the West might signify social and technological progress but also individualism, indifference to the natural environment, social alienation and the exploitation of the weak, or rather, less powerful peoples; in other words, these are the negative features of Western modernity which other, much smaller groups of people also try to combat through their own discourses and appropriations of archaeological knowledge.

The emphasis given locally to the fact that numerous important things associated with modernity were first invented in Crete implies the need for recognition of the Cretan contribution to modern culture. In a way similar to that related to the use of the Acropolis during the Greek encounters with the West (Yalouri 2001), Knossos also has a central position in the local pursuit for acknowledgment of the island’s primary cultural role. But this time, the “addressees” are extended: Cretan attempts are directed to both the rest of Greece and Europe. The Minoan past should be recognised as the forerunner of the classical *and* the European world. Especially in terms of the European “debt” to Minoan antiquity, Cretan discourse makes full use of Evans’s opinions, although these seem not to have the desired reception outside Greece, where the Minoan monuments remain relatively unknown: they were discovered fairly recently and have played a limited role in the Western imagination, which by no means is comparable to the impact of classical antiquity.

Yet Minoan Crete represents an unusual form of modernity: it is the forerunner of many Western features whereas it also embraces many local traditions, normally framed as oriental, slightly backwards and, certainly, in opposition to the West. Nevertheless, it is exactly this double character ascribed to Minoan culture, modern and traditional at the same time, which allows Cretans to appropriate it accordingly

while the constant reference to the characteristics of this “pioneer ancient civilisation” dated thousands of years ago challenges the global fear of identity loss associated with cultural homogenisation. Hall has argued that the recent “...strengthening of ‘the local’ is probably less the revival of the stable identities of ‘locally settled communities’ of the past, and more that tricky version of ‘the local’ which operates within, and has been thoroughly reshaped by, ‘the global’ and operates largely within its logic” (1999 [1993]: 37). In Crete, the materialisation of the double meaning of Cretanness as located between tradition and modernity is thoroughly shaped by national and international processes whereas it functions as the island’s response to the perceived effects of globalisation.

Moreover when Crete projects itself as the ancestral land of Greek culture, not only does it require respect and recognition for its contribution to the “classical miracle” but also it resists its marginalisation, seen as imposed by Athens. As both “Mother of Greece and Europe”, it declares its distinctiveness and sometimes indirectly challenges decisions taken by others on its behalf. Tensions and complaints about the neglect that Athens shows towards the island and small acts of rhetorical resistance against national bureaucratic practices and policies arise in conjunction with accounts of the island’s long history. During this history, Cretan people have sacrificed their lives for the country’s freedom and the safeguarding of great values which are associated with the significance of Minoan civilisation.

Finally, just as similarity with the past is a key concept in putting archaeological knowledge “into use”, any noticed rupture from it is equally important. Ruptures from the Minoan past are noted by people living in Crete, Cretan or not, and regard negative aspects of the modern way of life. In these cases, the present is refracted through the knowledge of an idealised past: the relationship of the Minoans with nature arises when environmental stability is considered at stake; the architectural virtues of Minoan buildings are particularly stressed when they are contrasted with modern “inhuman” cities; the exceptionally good Minoan taste is highlighted as such when its lack causes disappointment in current contexts; and the Minoan love for life is often remarked in relation to modern alienation, loose social ties and stressful lifestyle.

Ancient history becomes a way of metaphorical or “analogic” thinking. Minoan Crete functions as an example of a *model society* which under certain conditions could be repeated in the present or, rather, in the future. Feminist, metaphysical and other local discourses articulated at the intersection of place and historical knowledge expand and elaborate the local notions of history and incorporate in them women’s organisations, new-agers, seekers of spirituality, followers of the Goddess movement, etc. or simply people who are looking for interesting aspects of the past that can inspire the present. The temporal distance that divides these people from the appropriated and reformulated Minoan culture allows the idealisation of ancient Crete and at the same time calls for a change of the disconcerting aspects of our modern condition.

## *Chapter 5*

### **MODERN AND ANCIENT KNOSSOS:** **A GEOGRAPHY OF CONFLICT**

Just a few hundred metres south of the archaeological site of Knossos, a narrow secondary road leads to the top of a hill where the few tourists curious enough to climb it will find only a small church, St. Paraskevi. The view from the top embraces the whole valley of Knossos with the ruins of the palace and the other lesser known antiquities; in addition, one can see Evans's villa with its beautiful Edwardian garden, the surrounding hills – mostly covered with olive trees and vineyards, and, on busy days, numerous buses blocking the traffic with hundreds of tourists moving around in colourful groups. Those who decide to stay a little longer in front of the church may also see – although it is unlikely that they want to include them in their pictures – the premises of a nightclub very close to the site's entrance and the two settlements of modern Knossos, Makrytichos and Bougada Metochi, which, in many respects, contradict the tourists' aesthetic search for the traditional and the picturesque as described in previous chapters. It is also very unlikely that they will take a picture of the main road which leads to the city of Heraklion and its suburbs. These seem absolutely packed with modern concrete buildings up to the point where the visitor's eyes reach the buildings of a hospital, very close to the fence of the ancient palace.

The viewpoint from the hill of St. Paraskevi actually reveals very modern and very old features of life in the area which, as this chapter will show, are often in conflict with each other. What visitors actually see from up there is simultaneously picturesque and ugly, impressive and indifferent, satisfying and annoying, hence only partially worth being photographed. To put it differently, it is the view of a disputed landscape for, in the same spatial framework, it combines conflicting ways of seeing the area, its meaning and social significance.

In effect, the characteristics of the Knossian landscape as noticed from the hill temporarily take us outside the boundaries of the ancient palace and bring us closer to the modern inhabitants of the area, the Knossian people. The monument of Knossos, as a major emblem of Crete, makes them feel proud of their place. At the same time, however, the official management of the area has a strong impact on their lives and imposes severe limitations on the organisation of their everyday practices. Local people propose their own *perspective* of the Knossian landscape and challenge the meanings attributed to their place by others: Are in fact *all* ruins important? Where does “the palace of Minos” end? Where is modern life “allowed” to begin? Why are some modern uses of the land judged incompatible with the Minoan heritage?

In the last few years, the subjective, polysemic and contestational character of landscapes, especially of those with important historic and symbolic value, has become the focus of numerous anthropological, geographical and archaeological studies (Ingold 1993, Bender 1993b, 2002: 138-139, Tilley 2006). As constructed “cultural images” (Daniels and Cosgrove 1988: 1), landscapes often become subject to appropriation or dispute according to the representational perspective through which the surrounding material world is “translated” (see J. Duncan 1995: 415; Hirsch 1995: 2). Their “reading” through shifting perspectives (see Cosgrove 1989, Edwards 1998: 157) may tell us a lot about the ways social groups locate themselves in their environment and its history while they remember and objectify the significance of specific localities.

The assertion that landscapes are “socialised” not only through the gaze but also through human action, experience and emotional involvement (Bender 1993a: 11, cf. Tilley 1994: 14-15, Århem 1998, Feld and Basso 1996) led me to explore the local “translation” of the monument’s environment, i.e., the way in which Knossian people conceptualise the landscape of their everyday life experiences. Their view is in sharp contrast to the official management of the area by the Archaeological Service. These two competing visions of the area reveal, as in other areas in Greece, the conflict or, rather, the interplay between “social and monumental time” (Herzfeld 1991), between a “monumental conception of national history” (ibid.: 5), on the one hand, and the stories of ordinary people, on the other. This is a battle which, in

practice, involves the agency of several “viewers” of the landscape that negotiate and debate the positions of each side.

The “unofficial” reading of the Knossian landscape by its inhabitants and some first assumptions about the mechanism that supports, produces and reproduces the struggle over the future of Knossos are also included in the lines of this “geographical” account that differs from those encountered in the tourist guides. In my account, Knossos not only is a tourist attraction and a place associated with admirable Cretan, Hellenic and European values but also a “localised” (De Boeck 1998: 25) and practiced space (Hastrup and Olwig 1997: 3-8) whose organisation is a meaningful expression of social relations, conflicts, personal pursuits and negotiation of national ideals on a small scale.

## **I. LABILE VALUES OF SPACE IN THE KNOSSIAN LANDSCAPE**

### **- A picture of the life in the area around the monument**

The village of modern Knossos is a small place of less than 400 inhabitants. It is basically split into two major parts: *Bougada Metochi*, on the hill west of the site, and *Makrytichos*, the settlement behind the so-called “theatre area” of the ancient monument. A few hundred metres from the south end of the palace’s ruins – at the banks of *Kairatos River*<sup>1</sup> – a couple of settlements with a handful of houses, *Aghios Georghios* (or *Vlychia*) and *Aghia Irini*, constitute the third part of what is now modern Knossos (see Fig. 61-65).

It seems that *Bougada Metochi* was established in the early nineteenth century by people coming from Vlachia, modern Romania, where an important community of Greek merchants flourished during Ottoman times. The surname *Vlachakis*, uniting many Knossian families with kinship ties gives some credibility to this locally told genealogy. The hamlet of *Makrytichos* (“Long Wall”) is much older, possibly dated in late medieval times, and owes its name to a Roman wall always visible above ground. Today, the names of the two neighbourhoods are used only locally when there is need to distinguish between them, while the monument, the broader agricultural area and the residential zones, considered by the local population as a unit, are altogether called *Knossos*.

The area became known after the first digging attempt by *Kalokairinos* in 1878 (see above, chapter 1). Thereafter, its relevance to mythical Knossos, after which it was re-named, was definitely established. The foreign researchers, especially *Evans*, who soon arrived in the area, linked the place to the mythical palace of King *Minos* and since then life at Knossos has been closely associated with the results of the British and Greek excavations conducted in the area.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Kairatos* is the official name of the torrent *Katsabadianos*, which, according to archaeologists, in Minoan times was navigable and connected Knossos to the north coast.

Two major scientific institutions operate here, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Inspectorate of Antiquities, that is, the Heraklion branch of the Archaeological Service which comes under the Ministry of Culture, and the British Archaeological School. The latter, housed since Evans's times in the *Villa Ariadne*, includes within its fence a house for visiting researchers, important Minoan and Roman antiquities, as well as the Stratigraphic Museum, where the material discovered in the area is stored and studied. Although after the war the villa was donated to the Greek Archaeological Service, it has kept until today its role as a research centre annexed to the British School of Athens, with its own director and an appointed curator. In summer months, archaeologists affiliated with the school, mainly from British universities, spend some time here. Relations with the local population have been generally good without significant problems. In older times, when Knossians used to work at British excavations or as wardens at the villa, they provided the school's archaeologists with their intimate knowledge of the area. It has been a while since the school has carried out rather limited projects which, in any case, do not affect local properties; and its archaeologists have no say in issues regarding the protection of antiquities, handled normally by the Greek Archaeological Service and its Technical Office.

Despite its proximity to the city of Heraklion, Knossos maintains the dimensions and lifestyle of a village. Rather small houses built mainly in the Sixties and the Seventies, some with orchards and roofs with ceramic tiles are located on both sides of small backstreets. A tiny shop, the only one in the area, is located at Makrytichos, as well as a playground for children. At Boughada Metochi, the primary school is not operational and the few local children have to attend the closest school in Heraklion.

The school building is now used for the gatherings of the Cultural Association of Knossos. As the village administratively belongs to the Municipality of Heraklion, the few hundreds Knossians can have no representative in its local council, even though, due to the antiquities, they face difficulties that differentiate them from all other citizens of Heraklion. Thus the association, whose presiding committee is elected regularly, is the only collective organisation at Knossos and the only one that seeks to put some pressure on local and national authorities to improve the living conditions of the locals.



Knossian houses are very close to each other. Almost anything that happens here is noticed and commented on, for example, the arrival of sons, daughters and grandchildren who live in Heraklion or in Athens. As most Knossians are over the age of 50, news from their children and their families feed, among other topics, everyday discussions, gossip and exchange of views. Especially in summer, people would take their chairs out on the street and chat until late, breaking the silence of the day.

On the main road the situation is different. Just in front of the palace, there are some tourist enterprises, tavernas, souvenir-shops, tourist kiosks and parking places, not always operating legally. Their number and opening times vary slightly from year to year, depending on the season and the extent to which laws concerning the operation of businesses in the area are implemented. The businesses are owned and run by Knossian families who, due to the competition among them and their rather low numbers of clients, rarely need to employ foreigners for assistance and, often, find themselves at the position of touting for clients. The same tavernas also serve the few inhabitants of Knossos who would like to have a coffee out, since there is no other coffee-house for them. Finally, those who do not possess any property on the main road utilisable for tourist purposes still work as farmers or are employed in the city where they commute daily. In many cases, as usually happens in Crete, farming is practiced in conjunction with a person's main occupation.

**- “The antiquities have destroyed our lives”: Resentment among the inhabitants of modern Knossos**

According to Greek law, all ancient remains located either above or under ground as well as their surrounding areas are considered national heritage, therefore they are under the strict control of the state. For this reason, not simply the palace but the whole valley of Knossos, even the quarters without visible or excavated antiquities, should be thoroughly protected. Supervised by the 23<sup>rd</sup> Inspectorate of Antiquities of Heraklion, the area is divided into two zones. In them, a symbolic hierarchy of land uses has been set up, classifying them as suitable, acceptable, or inappropriate and therefore illegal.

Zone A is an area of absolute protection. Almost all activities held or planned here undergo rigid inspection. It starts less than a kilometre from the entrance of the site, very close to the “Venizeleion” Hospital, which is literally built above some ancient cemeteries. The hospital’s area is considered “Zone B”. The crossing of the “bureaucratic border” between the two zones is clearly felt by visitors: entering the zone, they face the change from an urban to a more rural landscape in which the city’s modern construction works stop suddenly (see Fig. 64).

The area of the village, however, does not belong to the state, as happens for example with all archaeological sites or the land plots with unearthed ancient structures that have been expropriated after compensating their owners. In contrast, the land and all structures built before the presidential decree of 1976 that introduced the division in zones remained private property, though under the state’s control. Therefore, in order to ensure the protection of the still hidden antiquities, as well as of what was considered as a suitable landscape around the excavated ancient remains, Knossians became, due to their village’s location in the heart of Zone A, part of a secluded landscape. The symbolic and historical significance of Knossos, also as an emblem of Greece, and Crete, in particular in the eyes of foreigners, justified the extent of the two zones. As Caftanzoglou has argued in her study about Anafiotika, the inhabited neighbourhood around the Athenian Acropolis which since the late nineteenth century has been under dispute, the implementation of the Greek

state's discipline techniques over the local population who live near ancient sites depends directly on the importance of archaeological monuments and their role as signifiers of the country's identity to non-Greeks (2001: 86).

Yet what is "good" and what is "bad" for the landscape around the Minoan monument?

It is obvious that according to the official interpretations, building in the area is not an appropriate activity. New houses can only be constructed within the very tight boundaries of the two settlements and cannot exceed 80 cm<sup>2</sup>; neither can they be higher than 3.70m. Construction is possible only after extended archaeological inspection. This, in turn, may involve excavation and even expropriation of the land when the finds are believed to be very important. As a result, people in Knossos are not allowed to live as they wish or can afford. Regardless of their economic situation, they dwell in spaces considered by themselves small and unsuitable for more than two people. Moreover, the state compensations given to the Knossians after (voluntary or compulsory) expropriation of their properties are insufficient, as they argue, to buy plots elsewhere.

The applied restrictions also concern repairs of all kinds, constructions in the countryside meant for agricultural purposes, etc. Even farming with modern technological equipment, when it involves digging deeper than 20cm in the ground, is not permitted.

Thus the enclosures of the palace, the boundaries of the First and the Second Archaeological Zones and the limits of the two modern settlements form multiple boundaries fixed on the space of Knossos. The investigation of their impact allows us to distinguish between three different domains: that of the palace's ruins, i.e., an undisputed national space; that of the First and Second Archaeological Zones, where the severe restrictions and huge objections to them are based on a differential perception of the term *environment*; and finally, that extending beyond that point: i.e., the urban landscape of Heraklion, the city with the largest number of unauthorised constructions in the whole country – a landscape that represents the

urban modernity that many inhabitants of Knossos would like to pursue for their own area as well.

All these rules have led to a peculiar situation: Knossians possess extensive land from which they cannot benefit. The short distance from Heraklion, one of the richest cities in the whole country which tends to expand at all costs, makes them feel more underprivileged. They are unable to sell their land because nobody wants to buy it (given that building is not permitted); at the same time, neither can they increase their income from intensive farming as long as they are not allowed to dig and plough their plots easily, efficiently and fast. Most Knossians argue that there is not even a serious economic benefit from having such a popular site next to their houses: tourist enterprises cannot be built and the money collected from the thousands of tickets bought by visitors does not “remain” at the place, but is centrally collected and redistributed nationwide by the Ministry of Culture. Not least, the Archaeological Service does not favour hiring Knossian youngsters as guards, a fact that increases local unemployment and feelings of exclusion of the locals from their home area.

This is how one of my Knossian informants described the situation:

*The antiquities have offered a lot to Greece; but not to us, the permanent population of Knossos. They have destroyed us...Other people think that we benefit from the tourists! No benefit at all! [The antiquities cause] only problems. Why can't we build a small house? Even when they give us the permission, we rush to finish it as quickly as possible, scared that they will tell us 'stop it!' (Lefteris Vardakis)*

And his wife adds:

*We have to struggle here. There is no coffee-shop for us; no school... there is not even a small shop to buy the basic things; even when we need some salt, we have to go to the supermarkets [of the city] to buy it... (Sophia Vardaki).*

A tourist shop proprietor explains the stance of the “Archaeology”:

*They [the archaeologists] play upon the grief and preoccupation of the landowners (“pezoun me ton pono mas”)...whatever you ask them, there is only one answer: ‘no’. (M. Perakis)*

And another one summarises:

*Archaeologists love stones, not people.*

Resentment and mutual suspicion characterise the relationship between the local population and the servants of the Archaeological Service. Cultural realities of past and present seem to be in direct conflict and their negotiation entails the compromise between specialist and social knowledge as well as the exercise of power and attempts of resistance to it.

### **-Surveillance, tensions and scepticism**

The complaint coming from Knossian people that they are permanently under surveillance and unfairly dealt with by the state and its representatives arises during all local narrations. Any small job people normally do on their own in order to cope with their everyday needs here undergoes scrutinised checks: putting a hedge around a vegetable garden, replacing a rusty fence with a new one or repairing the collapsing roof of a hencoop. Such actions, especially when urgent, are done secretly, impressively quickly and with extreme caution so that the Inspectorate of Heraklion with its limited staff “does not get wind of them” (“*den perni prefa*”). However, the “Archaeology” may appear suddenly to halt works, sometimes contradicting its own prior decisions, and to impose fines that the frustrated villagers consider irrational. More than anything else, acting on behalf of national ideals and the general public’s interests, archaeologists end up intervening in local family matters and personal life choices.

The feeling of indifference and neglect from a repeatedly unreliable state is even stronger when Knossians compare their situation with that of people living only a few hundred metres away, mainly on the slopes behind Bougada Metochi. These hills – which belong to the Second Archaeological Zone – have become the favourite area of many Herakliotes who wish to escape from the city and build their houses, even large villas, close to the countryside, yet at a short distance from both the city and the sea. Some of them have managed to obtain the basic certificates and permits from civil engineers and local authorities, in spite of the existing restrictions regarding the environmental protection of the area. The Archaeological Service – especially when there is no visual contact with the palace – is less strict there than in Zone A, or, often, is unable to control such a vast area efficiently. Understandably, the creation of a compact “nouveau-riche” settlement in the Second Zone has incited further resentment in the inhabitants of Knossos, who are thoroughly constrained by the law and scrupulously controlled by its guards.

In a public letter of complaint published on the local press in 2005, the Cultural Association of Knossos noted categorically:

*We consider unacceptable the fact that the local authorities punish us with enormous fines because we slightly exceeded the legally allowed height of our houses. We did that **not in order to make villas but just a second room for our children**, so that we do not have to sleep all together [an old-fashioned custom] in the year 2005. It is also unacceptable that some houses have no water supply and the hamlets of Vlychia and Aghia Irini have no central drainage system [because digging in the area is impeded by the Archaeological Service].<sup>2</sup>*  
(emphasis added)

People's arguments are expressed more emphatically and certainly without the relevant embarrassment when the “Archaeology” obstructs works of general public use, such as the noted by the association drainage system, or the making of asphalt roads, football fields for children, even churches and chapels. In the late 1980s, the

---

<sup>2</sup> “Patris”, daily local newspaper published in Heraklion, 3-6-2005 (www.patris.gr, acc. 26-5-2006).

difficulties placed by the inspectorate in the expansion of the Venizeleion Hospital provoked strong reactions, summarised then by a hospital patient as follows:

*Full of anger, all patients at the hospital regularly see policemen together with members of the Archaeological Service hindering the work of the contractor that manufactures the caravans. These caravans will be used by the hospital as emergency surgeries in order to serve us, you, everybody. We therefore ask the government, if such a thing exists, who is governing here, the government or the so-called Archaeological Service?*

*The prefecture, the local counsellor, the mayor and the Town Planning Office should interfere forcefully. If the authorities are not interested in doing so, all the patients together will protect the works [for the hospital] ...against the illegal [sic] practices of the Archaeological Service. Because, as many of the patients who live near archaeological sites say, even planting a tree further than 15-20 cm deep in the ground is not allowed! If this could ever be possible!<sup>3</sup>*

Such bitter complaints raise important issues concerning the exercise of power and the bureaucratic hierarchy in the Greek public sector. In people's criticisms the Archaeological Service appears as a powerful institution that capriciously imposes its will on everybody. Its decisions are so unreasonable, many people argue, that they intimately contradict the very notion of legality, a notion which for the author of the letter as well as for many others is tantamount to a living society's (and "not the stones'") benefit. Thus, to the eyes of an angry or frustrated citizen, the "Archaeology's" actions are judged as *illegal*. Hence the government is asked to take action, forgetting that the Archaeological Service is one of the very few bureaucratic agencies in the country that reports directly to the government and operates strictly on behalf of the nation's ideals, with no essential dependence on non-state agencies. Ironically, the constantly repugnant and blameworthy bureaucracy is asked here to intervene and bring the capricious (for some, even malicious) archaeologists, back to a "legal", i.e., logical, hierarchical order.

---

<sup>3</sup> "Tolmi", daily local newspaper published in Heraklion, 7-11- 1987: 3.

Unsurprisingly, therefore, after terrible pressures exercised on the Archaeological Service by many parties involved, the hospital was finally expanded, despite its critical location at the edge of the First Archaeological Zone.

#### **-A state “intrusion” into kinship and other local social relations**

Besides the problems described so far, the official interpretation and management of the ancient monument’s landscape has had a considerable impact on the locals’ social relations.

As in most places in Greece, parents at Knossos tend to provide their children, often before the child’s marriage, with parts or the whole of their property. This widely acknowledged parental attitude, often considered a moral obligation, is expressed in the form of dowries (for daughters) and, after the legal abolition of the dowry in 1984, in the form of parental gifts. As such, they are given to children of either sex. Nevertheless, as long as building is not permitted almost anywhere in the valley, inheritances in the area have lost their actual meaning and prospective value. Properties are essentially blocked and the uses that are allowed within them (e.g., farming) mean very little for the Knossian youngsters who search for a better future out of Knossos, to the further disillusionment of their parents. Sophia Vardaki, a Knossian lady, whose two sons have moved to Heraklion and Athens respectively, commented:

*...Oh my young girl, this place has ended up with only old people...Our children are obliged to go elsewhere to live; and [because of the situation] they need to pay rent for a place to stay.*

Paying rent is actually a sign of low social status, tantamount to uncertainty and social dependency. It is more so when the parents do have the necessary money, the property and the willingness to offer a house to their children about to get married, but they are not allowed to do so.



Among the prohibitions, the one concerning vertical construction of a separate house above that of the parents causes most resentment. “*Here, we would like to build two and three-storey houses*” (“*Emis edo tha thelame na htisoume diorofa ke triorofa*”) many Knossians confess. In effect, their long struggles to confirm their roles as good parents supporting their children who are starting their own families have become pointless. Even those Knossians who would not prefer the annexation of their village to Heraklion and the assumed local economic development explain how complicated life has become for all because their property rights are so drastically limited:

*The only good thing that we can enjoy here is that our place won't become a city of cement (“tsimentoupoli”). If we were allowed, we would have a whole town here (“politia”). In a way, this is good; if Knossos remains a village, nobody will disturb us. But think a bit of those [parents] who have two daughters and are not able to dower them despite the plots they own. Is this acceptable?”* (Giorgos Gerakis)

Not only the demonstration of the parents' support of and affection towards their children is impeded on behalf of the preservation of the antiquities' landscape; specific male and female assertions are also contested (cf. Herzfeld. 1991: 143-147). The long efforts of diligent Knossian men to cultivate fields or to increase their property and agricultural production proved futile in one day, when the archaeological law took effect. For each Knossian, the possibility to be a *nikokiris*, that is a good and dignified family man, householder and professional has been at stake ever since.

The state's policy at Knossos impacts on local women as well. They find it extremely difficult to act as good housewives, having to manage such confined and old-fashioned households. Not least, their self-presentation as devoted Christians is also affected, if it is to judge from the words of an old lady who lives at Makrytichos, and feels very attached to St Paraskevi, the church above the archaeological site :

*...and I have another complaint. Can you see on that slope over there? This is the church of St. Paraskevi. We celebrate Her grace every year; our priest is a very good person... And all we wanted was to improve the small road which leads to the top, so that people could drive up there. So we asked the D.E.I. [the electricity company] to put up some lights, but the Archaeology stopped us, because, they say, electric lighting spoils the environment...*" (Mrs Geraki)

Problems also permeate social relationships among neighbours. These are related to cases in which the "Archaeology" gets informed unexpectedly about so-called "minor construction works" despite the secrecy with which these are undertaken. This, some Knossians claim, is due to the action of some jealous neighbours who report any repair or house addition because they "*do not wish to see their neighbours prosper*" ("*na prokovoun*"). Every attempt, for example, to install proper toilets in his taverna, says a proprietor, leads to the communication of such information to the "Archaeology". Such hostile and secret attitudes, commonly called *karfoma* ("nailing") reveal the lack of trust between those involved, and is considered a particularly immoral way of coping with competition.<sup>4</sup> This particular proprietor is convinced that it is his neighbours' continuing "nailings" that make him appear in court so often for what he called "necessary additions" to his property. Otherwise, the Inspectorate would not have noticed them, nor would his license have been recalled so frequently. His wife adds that going to court every month has become part of a regular routine with which they are familiar. However, the pressure and the troubles have been such that they decided to move out of Knossos and leave the house above the tavern (which is dated 1912, as they proudly state). They settled in a nearby suburb of Heraklion from which they commute daily during the tourist season, i.e., when the tavern is open. In this way they keep their distances from what they see as eroded social relations ("*allotriomeni*") occurring among villagers. Life in Heraklion gives them the opportunity to avoid the surveillance exercised by both their fellow entrepreneurs and the "insensitive" Archaeological Service.

---

<sup>4</sup> For the historical grounds of the practice of *karfoma* and *roufania* ("pimping") on national and Cretan collective experiences, see Herzfeld 1991: 94-95.

### **-Opposite views from outside the village**

The negative ideas about the attitudes of archaeologists and the role of the civil service do not express the opinions of all the people involved or interested in the problem. For many Cretans, who obviously are not affected by the Inspectorate's restrictions, the current image of Knossos is far from that of a truly protected area. On the contrary, it constitutes another sad example of "Greek barbarism", i.e., of the unacceptable neglect that the state shows towards its heritage when overtly or secretly it allows the aesthetic degradation of its historical landscapes.

Recently, a Cretan journalist collaborating with "Eleftherotypia" (a major Athenian newspaper) put forward one such critical opinion. He revealed to the newspaper's national reading public that 200 unauthorised buildings "were found to be" within the First Archaeological Zone of Knossos (Georgoudis 2001: 18-19). Given that members of the local authorities were presented as being involved in the "scandal" (ibid.), the matter was described as a contestation of history annihilating Greek and particularly Cretan cultural identity:

*A well-planned crime has been committed against our cultural heritage, against Knossos, the monumental complex, which is considered as the inception of ancient Hellenic civilisation and the cultural starting-point of Europe. At the same time, Knossos is the monument which condenses more authentically than any other the Minoan era in Crete and the creative myth of the island...*

*Hundreds of unauthorised constructions have been built within the First and the Second Archaeological Zones of Knossos, even some shops. Most of them are centrally supplied with electricity and water after the approval granted by the Town Planning Office of the Municipality of Heraklion. ...*

*The violation of the sacred space of Knossos and the barbarism manifested through the over-exploitation of the surrounding landscape, which has met no reaction from the local authorities, with the exception of the archaeologists, is unprecedented and reflects the*

*vulgarity and the decadence of [our] political, social and cultural institutions...*

*How is it possible, for a city [Heraklion] which draws its pride, its prestige, its identity as well as its wealth from this particular monumen, not to be worried about the pitiful state of one of the most important archaeological sites of mankind? (Georgoudis 2001: 18-19, my translation)*

Similar ideas are expressed by other people who feel concerned about or responsible for the denigration of the Knossian landscape. Here follows a passage from a talk by Y. Sakellarakis, a prominent archaeologist and director of the Inspectorate for eight years, addressing an audience of Herakliotes in the city's library, the Vikelaia, in the context of a conference series on local history. At some point he stops his narration on the Minoan past of the area and apologises for the current decay of the Knossian antiquities as well as his and the Archaeological Service's failure to protect them efficiently:

*I am sorry but I shall not accompany you on the tour to Knossos because I feel ashamed to look again at the most important archaeological site of Crete in this pitiful state to which it has been reduced...*

*... the ruination of the environment; the vineyards that have become unauthorised parking places – with their garish signs and the clumsy copies of 'the Prince with the Lilies' competing with those who tout for clients; the sinister looking buildings of the industrial area of Heraklion which stand at Kallithea [a hill seen from Knossos]... I am referring to the rapid decay of the poor ancient ruins and their sensitive materials, unprotected not only from weather conditions but also from the millions of visitors' merciless feet. After years, even Evans's restorations, made out of concrete, face the risk of collapse. ...Of course I do not deny the personal responsibility I had concerning the major issue of Knossos when I was the head of the service. But what can a ramshackle service do nowadays, which, from a scientific institution, has been intentionally transformed into a branch of the*

*state mechanism, embroiled in the complicated tentacles of bureaucracy?"* (Sakellarakis 2000: 28-29, my translation).

Sakellarakis's rhetorical apology exemplifies only some of the difficulties archaeologists face in the everyday exercise of their role. The employees of the Inspectorate find themselves trapped between their scientific commitments, their duty to save the antiquities and the bureaucratic character of their agency. Their major problem, however, is the embarrassment they feel before citizens who have to conform to the law, adopt undesired specific aesthetic forms and renounce their, otherwise understandable, plans, such as the building of a second, a larger or a more modern house. This burden is tougher for archaeologists of Cretan origin and those who, having worked on the island for years, have developed strong ties to the Herakliote society in general and the local community of Knossos in particular.

So the archaeologists' job is by no means an objective and clear bureaucratic implementation of legal regulations. It involves endless discussions and interaction with the local community, the result of which also depends on the officials' style and mien. As an archaeologist with long experience in the area explained to me, "*when archaeologists act as malignant policemen, archaeology loses its meaning; the ancient heritage is the intellectual property of every citizen in the country, including the unfortunate inhabitants of Knossos*". Thus, Knossians are (at least for some archaeologists) not only insensitive destroyers of a great heritage but also, because of the state's attitudes, unfortunate people: for them living in an area with antiquities turns out to be a bad luck.

Of course, a more "sociable" practice of archaeology allows villagers to partake in conservation efforts. Also, it often leads some of them to report significant antiquities or even to hand them over to the archaeologists – an extremely rewarding feeling for an employee of the Inspectorate. Yet this does not make the situation a lot easier. The protection of antiquities remains a tricky and very delicate game which involves not only archaeologists and local people but also other powerful segments of Cretan society and the national authorities and of course considerable amounts of money regarding construction work and tourism-related activities in the Heraklion

area. Yet, at first instance, no one would declare indifference towards the symbolic value of the ancient heritage.

**- State ambiguity and the interplay between “social and monumental time” at Knossos**

The opposition between national history and ordinary people’s stories regarding the preservation of the past as envisaged by the state ideology and the specific needs and hopes of the local population brings us into the domain of *social and monumental time* as described by M. Herzfeld in his ethnography of the Old Town of Rethymno, in Crete (1991). In the mid-Eighties, the inhabitants of the old walled part of the town resisted the state’s attempt to transform their everyday family environments into collective monuments as this impacted on the organisation of their home spaces and lives, their plans for themselves and their children as well as on their property rights. The scholar presented the conflict as “a battle over the possession of identity” (1991: 4), a battle between the Greek state’s “bureaucratic modernity” that monumentalises home spaces, on the one hand, and the local people’s social lives and expectations, on the other (ibid: 5).

On the one hand, some significant features differentiate Knossos from the Rethymniote dispute. In Rethymno the value of cultural heritage resides in people’s houses (obviously, in the aesthetic form that the Historic Conservation Office has decided as most appropriate after several compromises), whereas at Knossos it resides in their harsh (though not straightforward) rejection. In Rethymno it is people’s inhabited spaces that express the “monumental conception of history” by the nation-state (ibid), whereas at Knossos, the very existence of the Knossian villagers’ houses (and shops) *contradicts* this conception. In fact, in the first case, the national ideology indicates the way the Rethymniotes of the Old Town should live by adapting their families’ future in the newly restored houses, while at Knossos local people are treated as if they *should not be* there: almost anything they do in the area, except perhaps for traditional farming, comes into conflict with the official view of what a “Minoan landscape” or, rather, a landscape around a Minoan monument should look like. Not least, the difference between the idealised

perception of antiquities long-standing in Greece, on the one hand, and the recently emerged appreciation for “traditional” architecture, on the other, differentiates the meaning ascribed (by all social agents involved) to the concept of “heritage” in the two cases and, consequently, the state’s disciplinary control and people’s comprehension of or resistance to it.

Yet what is apparent in both cases is that the preservation of what is considered national cultural heritage is far from a straightforward and unambiguous process: the conflict between the social and the monumental is, in practice, far from a direct and clear opposition. The implementation of laws and rules concerning the aspect of a lived environment passes through many agents’ social role, conflicting interests of people with varied opinions on the subject, diverse negotiation skills (as we have already seen in the case of the archaeologists) and different attitudes to the problems. In actual fact, in Knossos, as in Rethymno, the logic of heritage conservation is as social as that of the people who resist the “monumentalisation” of their everyday life spaces.

Thus many archaeologists working in the Knossos area confess that in their battle over the protection of antiquities they do not always have the full support of the other authorities involved. Particularly the Town Planning Office, which operates under the supervision of the Local Council of Heraklion, is often accused of ambiguity in the exercise of its duties within the archaeological zones. Some archaeologists complain that its employees, although they may be aware of unauthorised buildings being constructed, appear at the worksite only when the building process is completed and “it is too late to do something”. The Office also provides the owners of some unauthorised houses with the necessary certificates (which appear to conform to regulations) in order to have electricity and water supplies. Even policemen, archaeologists complain, intervene only after requests are made by members of the Archaeological Service itself, while they never confiscate the building materials in use, as the law clearly states that they ought to.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Patrolling of course is not a duty of the archaeologists but of the Town Planning Office and the police. Public prosecutors also have the right to intervene if they note or suspect harm to the antiquities. But very few landowners are actually stopped when they build without authorisation unless someone reports such an action to the police, that is, when he or she is ready to accept the

Moreover, although the law is clear in stating that such constructions built within archaeological zones should be demolished, no inhabited house is ever destroyed. Such an action would have a grave social impact on the local population and the state employees do not wish to assume this responsibility. Residents remain there for ever hoping that their houses will be legalised at some point, again in obvious contrast to the letter of the law. As Herzfeld remarks about the unauthorised constructions of Rethymno, built secretly and hurriedly inside the architectural cluster of the Old Town, “what is built cannot be unbuilt” (1991: 248)<sup>6</sup>: the physical presence of the buildings makes the bureaucracy weaker in the face of a practically irreversible condition. Finally and perhaps more ironically, when the owners and builders of these houses are brought to court, usually after years, they are sentenced for a simple town planning offence and not for degrading an archaeological site and indeed of Knossos, for which there are special legal clauses resulting from the symbolic significance ascribed to monument.

Lack of agreement and a hidden confrontation seem to occur between the local council authorities and the Archaeological Service, the bureaucratic agencies that play major roles in the Knossos area. The article by the Cretan journalist mentioned above included a brief but instructive interview with the vice-mayor of Heraklion. The official openly justified the “comprehension” shown by the Town Planning Office towards the illegal actions of some citizens who built within the archaeological zones without authorisation. Manifestly diplomatic, however, he did not distinguish between the very different problems and needs of the Knossian villagers and the Herakliotes who put up their villas on the neighbouring slopes: all people need this “comprehension”. What is arbitrary (*“afthereto”*), he asserted, is not the construction of buildings but the marking out of the archaeological zones by the specialists. Thus in his view, “the archaeologists mapped out the boundaries of

---

consequences of “nailing”. This role is ultimately assumed by the archaeologists in lieu of other more appropriate or less reluctant state employees.

<sup>6</sup> The scholar here rephrases the Greek proverb “what it writes it does not unwrite”, a Greek view about the irreversible power of fate on people’s lives which he links to the power of the pen, i.e., the very strong role of written evidence within the Greek bureaucratic logic (ibid.).



the zones like the colonialists of past times” (Georgoudis 2001: 18-19), that is irrationally, arbitrarily and, most interestingly, “without scientific criteria”.<sup>7</sup>

This rhetorical evocation of science towards qualified civil servants shows that the handling of “antisocial” attitudes (such as those of the archaeologists) towards citizens leads to the manipulation of the current situation for political purposes. As Soja (1989) and other theorists of space have argued, culture and politics co-organise space in order to make it a tool for the exercise of power.

For the authorities of Heraklion, the area covered by the archaeological zones is apparently too large. In 2005, the Heraklion Local Council for the first time supported the initiatives of some citizens’ associations of the broader Knossos area which claimed the reconsideration, i.e., the reduction of the zones’ borders. In fact, an exceptional reasoning underlies all voices now proposing the re-mapping of the archaeological zones: due to the existing strict rules, citizens are more likely to act illegally and therefore to harm the environment around the monument. Given the lack of a systematic method for controlling and stopping infractions, politicians propose less severe rules which can both support the citizens’ demands and cause less harm in the long run to the Knossian landscape as long as the (relatively) happy citizens find fewer reasons for disobeying.

The interest recently shown in the issue by local politicians (members of the local council, Herakliote MPs, etc.) reveals less embarrassment and fear of being criticised for indifference towards the country’s ancient heritage in respect to earlier times.<sup>8</sup> Perhaps such a stance does not aim to appeal to the few inhabitants of the village of Knossos but to a greater public. Not irrelevantly, the expansion of the city of Heraklion to the south often comes as an urgent demand prompted by the tight boundaries of the city and it forces the authorities to find feasible ways to “annex”

---

<sup>7</sup> In Greek, the word *afthereto* is used for both “unauthorised” and “arbitrary”.

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, the proposal for re-mapping of the zones made by the Cretan MP M. Stratakis in the Parliament (assembly of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2004, Parliament Acts, question no 5689). The MP (elected through PASOK) presented the demands of the Cultural Association of Knossos for expansion of the Knossos modern settlements as reasonable and asked the government to reduce the archaeological zones on the basis of, once again, “objective social and scientific criteria”. The Ministry of Public Works, however, rejected the proposal as contradicting the law.

former rural areas into its urban tissue. In practice, this means that until the legal inclusion of these areas into the city's plan, people may build unauthorised houses without considerable punishment; and their hope that the houses will be legalised is never baseless.

This is a vicious circle. The struggle between the Archaeological Service, the Town Planning Office and the local authorities – all public services controlled by the state – is indicative of the multi-faceted and intricate significance of archaeological heritage in Cretan society. It also shows the complexities of the Greek bureaucracy when it is called on to take action and defend the national ideals, while it reveals that there are no stable and predictable boundaries between “powerful bureaucrats” and “weak villagers”. The relative tolerance shown by archaeologists towards some intercessions on modern houses and interventions on the landscape, their general or selective willingness to compromise between what they see as legal protection of the monument's environment and what Knossian parents want to offer to their children, the favouritism masked in the humanitarian face of some employees at the Town Planning Office, the local council, the police and some judges towards at least some of the inhabitants of the Second Archaeological Zone all indicate the difficult, fluctuating and very relational role of the state bureaucracy. These factors render the official management of the ancient heritage a social practice full of contradictions and attempts to negotiate the complex quests of a society which is still strongly dependent on its landscapes of ancient ruins.

## **II. THE NEGOTIATION OF STATE POWER**

### **-Antagonism over the reading of “historical” aesthetics: modernity and tradition as pursued within the same space**

So far it has become obvious that Knossos constitutes a landscape of contradictory meanings. It carries the values of those who live in the area and those who decide about its future. Yet both sides tend to inscribe their narratives on the space around the monument. Either as an exercise of power or as a form of resistance to it, they propose two divergent ways of viewing Knossos.

According to the dominant understanding of Minoan heritage, as imposed by the Archaeological Service, anything considered “non-traditional” challenges the meaning of the ancient monument; it is improper and offensive to “historical aesthetics”. People’s houses and shops, at least as the Knossians build or repair them, constitute “a heretic geography” (Cresswell 1996), a dissonance to the beauty and the qualities of the Minoan remains as the specialists perceive them. Not accidentally, as has been mentioned in chapter 2, most overall pictures and postcards of the site include Evans’s planted forest as well as the adjacent farmed fields, while always excluding modern Knossos and the spaces intended for tourist use. The official interpreters of the site and those who “sell it” endorse a landscape without signs of (an inevitably observable, though) contemporary human presence.

Yet Knossians do not accept this reading of their area without objections. Quite the opposite, they articulate their own discourse and try to negotiate the state power in a variety of ways. Part of this process is the discussion going on locally about “traditional style” (“*paradosiako ifos*”) and the meaning of the term “environment” which the archaeologists claim to defend. Why do the villagers’ houses and tourist shops “offend” the environment? Why is the modern style necessarily not beautiful? And if it is true that the settlements of Knossos contravene the aesthetics of the adjacent site and its historical character, then, villagers argue, why do the authorities not establish the rules of a *proper traditional style* but simply forbid any construction?

A taverna-proprietor, for example, explains that he would not have any objection to following some clear rules given by the “Archaeology”, if its employees clearly defined the appearance that his house and shop should have:

*Why don't they tell us what they mean by “environment”? Let them say what they mean and we'll make everything traditional (“As poun ti enooun ki as ta kanoume ola paradosiaka”) What, for example, does Archanes have better that makes it the destination of so many people? ...and they don't have the antiquities we have here. But they [i.e., the Archaniote people] have found the means to get money for their village when here we are slaves of the Archaeology (“eno emeis edo eimaste desmioi tis arheologias”).*

The village of Archanes, which, as we shall see in the next chapter, has attracted great attention due to its historic conservation efforts, is presented as a place where the state neither imposes “unreasonable” rules on villagers nor neglects them as it does in Knossos. Although Archaniotes have “less important” (or, rather, less famous) antiquities, they obtain funds for different projects by promoting the traditional aspects of the village's past. In contrast, Knossians – who live next to “such an important monument” – fail to deal efficiently with bureaucracy and have no benefit from their heritage, given also the lack of precise rules about “the right traditional style” they should adopt.

This claim for a “traditional aesthetics” which the Knossians appear willing to follow is apparently an appropriation of the state's vocabulary concerning the overall importance of the country's past. It is also a rhetorical strategy (or rather *tactics*, again in the terms of de Certeau, 1984) to insinuate their own positions and ensure the “Archaeology's” consent to some of their demands – actually those pursuing “more modernity” for themselves and their children. Not surprisingly therefore, when they ask the authorities to arrange the traffic problems caused in front of the site, their basic argument is that the current situation is shameful since it occurs “in front of one of the most important monuments in Europe”. The same happens when the villagers ask for permission to repair their houses: otherwise, the image of an

uncared for or collapsing Knossian building might impact negatively on foreign visitors' judgements about the country's policy.

It is obvious that this and other rhetorical means used to challenge Greek bureaucratic practices involve the "transcription" of the public narrative on the importance of antiquities into a localised discourse by making use of the same terms employed in the nationalist construct: *tradition*, *heritage* and *history*.

In his work *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, the political scientist James Scott, who coined the terms "public" and "hidden transcripts", analysed the discursive practices that underpin power relations between dominators and subalterns. A *hidden transcript* is a rhetorical or even imaginary act of resistance, which consists of "offstage speeches, gestures, and practices that confirm, contradict, or inflect what appears in the public transcript" (Scott 1990: 4-5), i.e., in the open discourses of domination. In other words, a hidden transcript is a critique of power produced "beyond direct observation by powerholders" (ibid.) and through which oppressed people question domination.

In this context, when Knossians criticise the Archaeological Service or even the British School for any construction these two institutions undertake, e.g., those meant for the storage or the sheltering of antiquities, they "transcribe" the vocabulary on traditional aesthetics as well as on legality. In their words such constructions become "state aftereta", i.e., the state's own unauthorised (and arbitrary) works. State and scientific power are then strongly contested and ironically, archaeologists end up being accused of illegal practices.

The proprietor of a tavern in front of the site's entrance (the same who pointed out the meaning of tradition above) comments on this "arbitrariness":

*"If they [the archaeologists] are allowed to put up a shelter to cover the mosaics, why aren't we allowed to put up a pergola in our courtyard? ...What about the cement they used inside the site to build the museum-shop and the café? The law is not in effect for them, right?"*

The man argues that a café or a shelter inside the site built with the authorisation of the state employees, on the one hand, and similar constructions located outside it, such as his pergola, on the other, do not “offend” the environment differently; it is simply that the state *“employs two different criteria when applying the law, one for itself and one for the lay people”* (*“efarmozi dio metra kai dio stathma”*).

### **-Appropriate interventions: natural elements**

What is interesting to note here is that the practice of farming, in contrast to construction work, does not seem to contradict the historical meaning of the ancient monuments. Cultivating a few vines and olive trees is not impeded (provided, of course, that the soil is not agitated) despite the fact that 100 years ago, when Evans started the excavation, the hills were almost bare (Fig. 3). Therefore it could be argued that the landscape around the Minoan palace should look “natural” rather than intact. Like many rural landscapes, especially those with historical connotations (see Williams 1973), Knossos depends on what we think of as its opposite, i.e., the urban, polluted or industrial landscapes of our times which we try to keep at some distance from heritage sites.

This pursued “rurality” also conforms to the assumed historical aesthetics of the area, i.e., that of the allegedly unchanged Cretan culture since the Bronze Age. As Bender has put it, “the [Western] gaze swept the landscape, first in paintings, then in ways of positioning oneself within the landscape, and finally, through material intercessions to make the landscape conform to the aesthetic” (2002: 135). The “material intercessions” on the Knossian landscape pursued by archaeologists are consistent with the prevailing ideas about the character of the Minoan society when Cretans lived close to nature and cultivated the land. Ironically, this contradicts archaeology itself since many archaeological accounts assume the existence of a huge city around the palace in Minoan times. In fact, what is sought here is the construction of a “landscaped” image close to what we miss in everyday life and look for when we decide to visit, experience, represent or preserve *another* place and

its prestigious relics. Yet, idealised images of nature, when under power control, are rarely sustained by “ideal” means.

### **-Other schemes of “resistance”**

During the everyday conflicts with the archaeologists, especially with those of non-Cretan or non-Greek origin, the Knossians’ “hidden transcripts” involve the employment of stereotypes concerning local and national culture. The authority of Cretan hospitality, the supposed inferior value of Roman objects in comparison to the Minoan ones, the locals’ unequalled knowledge of the place when compared to that of “newcomer” archaeologists and the assumed right of Greek archaeologists to excavate in an area traditionally “dominated” by British scholarship constitute some additional rhetorical weapons of the local population when they formulate their own “offstage” narratives.

The wife of a tavern-owner (the same who had to move to Heraklion to avoid “nailings”) described to me a scene of confrontation with two female archaeologists, employees of the Archaeological Service:

*Last time, two young archaeologists came [as inspectors] and asked to measure one of the [tavern’s] walls. They mentioned that they could suggest compulsory expropriation. I got so angry that I told them: ‘you can choose between the two: either stay here to drink two glasses of raki offered by me, or measure what is to be measured and then get out of my place!’*

In the description of the quarrel, the passing reference to the treat (*kerasma*) to some raki implies that the tavern-owner, despite the arrogance that the archaeologist showed, did not hesitate to be generous with them, as a good Cretan must. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the stereotype of Cretan hospitality is often used at a symbolic level to challenge the power relation between a Knossian entrepreneur (providing his services “with a hospitable style” to thousands of foreign visitors) and the employee of the state. Offering a glass of raki to those who, unfairly and often

irrationally, come to impose their views on a local Cretan is a sign of personal moral superiority (cf. Herzfeld 1985: 220-22). It reverses, even for a moment, the power of the bureaucrat, especially of the non-Cretan, himself being allegedly ignorant of local values and practices. Generosity is not neglected in a Cretan's house even when the "xenos" (the foreigner, the stranger or the visitor) does not behave as he should or even offends the landlord. Treatment then becomes a moral weapon during a (normally fruitless) rhetorical attempt to affirm who commands the property in question.

Moral judgements concerning the importance of some antiquities in relation to others are another way of appropriating the archaeologists' vocabulary during similar conflicts. Roman antiquities, for example, are considered of much less value than the Minoan works. Thus, when the Archaeological Service expropriates plots with Roman antiquities, local voices are heard which question the meaning of relevant practices.

Let us follow a pertinent discussion by two Knossians, both almost illiterate, Giorgos Gerakis, in his eighties, and his wife Maria. As a worker, Gerakis took part in many British excavations at Roman and Minoan sites in the area. When he recalls the finds he unearthed he comments upon the objects' aesthetic and stylistic qualities:

*...if you think, all these nice [Minoan] things look quite modern, for example the bathroom of the queen with the fish [the fresco depicting dolphins]. Their [the Minoans'] jewels were very nice, even today it is difficult to chisel some of these materials. The Minoans were better [i.e., more advanced] than the Romans in some respects. They had great technology: the palace had three floors and it had natural lighting; only the Egyptians had similar things...*

[...]

*The most important object I have ever found was Minoan and it was made of ivory. We were digging in the place where the car park is now, in front of the main gate. It was that big and very beautiful; when the archaeologists saw it, they went crazy – it looked like it had just been made! I also found lots of Roman coins, but they are not*



*valuable; Minoan things have much greater value. They are beautiful and you think that they have just been manufactured...*

The old worker's classification of ancient civilisations echoes not only personal but also broader local evaluations of the archaeological pasts of Crete, and his judgements reiterate long-standing distinctions and priorities set by the Greek and foreign archaeological community concerning the primacy of the Minoan past over any later period (see Alcock 2002). As his wife agrees, Gerakis re-works the common discourse on the modernity of Minoan technology and style, as well as the national statement about Minoan antiquities, the basis of Greek civilisation, and the view of Roman culture as a rather insignificant imitation of the Classical Age. At this point, Gerakis's wife, who admits that she knows much less than her husband about history, expresses her sadness about a plot that her family "lost" when it was expropriated:

*..and to think that it was Roman! Some humble Roman walls! And to make you understand better, what did the Archaeological Service do with that? It put a wire fence all around it and left it to become a rubbish heap ("skoupidotopos")!*

In the lady's words, the state's attitudes appear even more unreasonable, hence they are criticised with seemingly more powerful arguments when people's properties are expropriated in order to maintain "insignificant" remains which in practice are treated exactly as such.

Finally, the local criticism of archaeological power also involves challenging the archaeologists' knowledge of the area or even their moral integrity. Indeed, some of the criticisms can go so far as to include the action of Sir Arthur Evans, although very few Knossians have memories of him. Local narrations describe him as the representative of the once powerful British nation who managed to control the archaeological history of their homeland for a very long time. Lefteris Vardakis, an old Knossian (who in earlier times represented the village before the Herakliote authorities), questions Evans's academic qualifications and expresses his mistrust of the scholar's morality:

*The English were not interested in the environment [in contrast to the contemporary Greek archaeologists of the Inspectorate]. They only wanted to discover things and to take them away. And they took many things [away]... Every time Evans left [for England], he carried trunks and suitcases. When he left for good, he carried just a tiny suitcase and it was only then that he went through inspection... And that time he only had his pants and things like that in it! But even if he took things away, of which we are not 100% sure, he also gave us things back. But [think of] Elgin! He only took and gave nothing back. He stole things that were taken to England; he caused harm and nothing else.*

*... Evans was not an archaeologist, he was – what is it called– a fortune hunter. All the more so, Greek archaeologists were forbidden from undertaking excavations. Later, when Papandreou [the first socialist prime minister] came [into power] he gave them freedom, he liberated them...*

In narrations like this, which are characterised by the tropes of the “socialist idiom”, i.e., developed after the first Greek socialist election victory in 1981, the emphasis is not put on the problems the villagers have with the state authorities but on the struggle of Greek archaeologists against an assumed British scientific hegemony. The familiar discourse against the powerful nations which deprived Greece of its ancient treasures also comes up, although, ironically, in Knossos it is exactly these treasures that “have destroyed the Knossians’ lives”.

Evans’s presence at Knossos can even be used to explain the reasons for the village’s poverty:

*At the excavation [until 1930], a lot of people worked. Every Saturday they took their wages in a small envelope. That money was just enough for some drinks at the coffee-shop and a slice of bread with some codfish. [...] People were very poor in those times... All people of the village worked at his [Evans’s] excavation, even the children. And this was the main reason that the children remained illiterate since*

*they worked there in order to get some extra money. So they did not go to school. (L. Vardakis)*

A cause-effect relationship is also employed by Vardakis in order to explain the fact that very few Minoan graves have been discovered recently in the area:

*Here there was a sort of English occupation. When the English left, the Greek archaeologists could not find any Minoan graves. And I say, how come? How do you explain the fact that the English could find so many and the Greeks cannot? Do you know? This is my theory: in the past when the locals ploughed the fields, they could see the holes in the ground and they informed the English. But the Greek archaeologists behaved badly. This stopped the locals from giving them information. They were afraid of losing their properties...*

Local knowledge is seen as an asset in the rhetorical negotiation of state power and is bracketed with the successful research of the locally working archaeologists. Unexpectedly, the Foucauldian (1972) linkage between knowledge and power, well-established by the Archaeological Service, is presented as threatened or even undermined. The archaeologists' discoveries in the field are not linked to official and academic knowledge anymore, but to the experience-based hence precious knowledge of the, otherwise, "weak and illiterate locals", as the villagers often present themselves. Their good will to promote research is potentially exchanged for some fair treatment by the "educated but insensitive" state employees.

### **-“Matter out of place”?**

Not surprisingly, some Knossians wonder if the state, provided it had the necessary funds for compensation, would ask the locals to abandon their houses and move elsewhere, in order to "liberate" ancient Knossos from their presence. In 1977, at the International Congress of Cretan Studies, a complete abandonment of the modern village was suggested in order to protect Knossos and its landscape from the already evident first signs of degradation and the unsuitable modern interventions (Howell

1976). The presented paper proposed the transfer of modern Knossos and the foundation of a new village for the Knossians in Marathitis, an area now occupied mainly by luxurious villas; but such a plan was never realised.

A similar reasoning underlies a more recent study for the protection of the Knossian landscape, undertaken by a group of architects on behalf of the Ministry of Culture.<sup>9</sup> In the study, the authors suggested the transformation of the two settlements of Knossos into museum and exhibition “traditional-looking” clusters (i.e., the current houses adapted for this purpose). According to the architects, such a use would encourage the gradual abandonment of the settlements by their residents, a process seen as vital for the preservation of the surrounding environment.

Although in both cases the scholars’ intention was undoubtedly the protection of the monument, they actually approached modern Knossos as an undesired entity causing a peculiar form of “pollution”, in Mary Douglas’s terms (1966). In fact, modern Knossos represents a threat to the Minoan monuments.

Mary Douglas has introduced the term “matter out of place” (see Douglas 1966, cf. Caftanzoglou 2001: 113-114) in order to describe things that transgress the boundaries of a symbolic-religious system and threaten to “pollute” the meaning and purity of established categories. In these cases, the previous order has to be re-established and things have to re-occupy their appropriate place within the correct symbolic order. “Cleansing” of such “matters out of place” is not rare in Greece, nor even in other countries where, with the occasion of historic conservation programmes, whole areas are evacuated of their inhabitants in accordance with European concepts of spatiality (see Herzfeld 2006). In places with important archaeological sites, the Greek state has often tried to “purify” the space around monuments either by excluding signs of modern life or by implementing strict social control over their spatial – and therefore social – organisation.

The Anafiotika quarter at the foot of the Acropolis of Athens is one of these areas. In the mid-nineteenth century, immigrants from the Cyclades islands built a small

---

<sup>9</sup> The study is known by the name of the leader of the team, Demetriou. It was completed in 1995.

settlement on the north-east slope of the rock, i.e., in the broader area of the archaeological site. As Roxane Caftanzoglou has shown (2001), since that time the settlement has been considered an “immoral” contrast to the Acropolis. The humble houses of the Anafiot residents contravened the meaning of the Acropolis, i.e., the major symbol of classical antiquity on which modern Hellenism has rooted its identity. The settlement – where now fewer than 40 people live, insisting on maintain their houses and their lively memories of the place – has undergone continuous disciplinary controls by the Greek state, according to the state’s ideological choices.

The case of Anafiotika presents some significant similarities with Knossos. For years both represented a similar threat to the aesthetic ideals of Greekness as objectified in its ancient monuments. But these days Anafiotika is seen as a “traditional” architectural complex reminiscent of the picturesque Cycladic islands (Caftanzoglou 2001: 146-153). Contrary to older views, it now signifies purity, albeit in a different sense: that encountered in the Greek island landscapes with their small, plain white houses. In addition, Anafiotika now constitutes a “holiday landscape” one can enjoy in the heart of modern Athens. The Greek Ministry of Culture now seems to be willing to preserve rather than demolish the settlement; not of course in the form of a living cluster of houses owned by the local residents but as a state-run “traditional neighbourhood”, which enhances the historical depth and aesthetic qualities of the ancient monuments on the top of the rock.

In contrast, Knossos cannot fit into such a scheme. The elements of picturesque rurality or of traditional architecture are neither enough to sustain such a landscape image, nor to serve as a persuasive counter-image to that of Heraklion. The area still belongs to its legitimate owners and not to the state, which, being unable to compensate the Knossians and acquire their lands, maintains the existing situation of disciplinary control hoping that the legal transgressions will cause the least possible harm to the “monumentality” of the Knossian landscape.

### **-The reverse side of the dispute: Knossos as a localised monument**

In a way, when the locals try to respond to the official view of their area coming from outside their village or even outside their island, they seem to refuse the Cretan, national and global values of the Minoan heritage. They also appear to reject what the millions of tourists seek to find during their visits at Knossos: beautiful remains of the past, signs of great achievements of an ancient people, a monumental structure immersed in a “traditional” Cretan landscape and an elusive contrast to the dissatisfying features of the present.

Yet locals do not wish to project indifference either for the value that the antiquities have for the nation or for the “universal meaning” of Minoan heritage. Actually, they would never challenge the importance of the archaeological site itself. The fence of Knossos demarcates the monument’s sacredness and the unquestioned domain of the state and its employees. It is outside this fence where problems begin: in the contested meanings of a landscape which happens to surround both the monument and their village and the management of which depends on (what they think as) an irrational bureaucratic logic.

Therefore, the conflict is not straightforward in the way it has occurred at other archaeological sites, such as Stonehenge (Bender 1998), where “heretical” readings of the monument directly and, in some cases, violently confronted state ideological practices. On the contrary, at Knossos, people accept the logic of heritage preservation as a general stance but object to the specific aesthetic standards that it poses.

As Knossians debate their positions, they negotiate their identity as well. Although, for example, they accuse the state of inconsistency and blame the antiquities for their disadvantaged lives, when Knossos is presented to the eyes of outsiders, it acquires all the characteristics of the national rhetoric concerning the importance of the ancient heritage. Then they seem to forget their quarrels with archaeologists and defend the outstanding meaning of “their” monument.

Sophia and Lefteris Vardakis, for instance, recall an encounter they had with some “ignorant” foreigners who had no idea about their famous land:

*You know, we have come across people who haven't even heard of Knossos. It was on the island of Cos some years ago, that I met some tourists who did not know of the existence of Crete at all. 'Where is it?' they asked me. 'Hey you, you don't know Crete? Knossos? Where have you been then?' I told them. English people! Those who should know Knossos better than anybody else because of Evans...*

Therefore Knossos is also a “local” monument, albeit a very problematic one. According to the dialogic terms characterising each of their relevant utterances (time, context, audience), such Knossian discourses are charged with particular, often emotive, overtones (cf. Bakhtin 1981). Moreover, when the antiquities are presented to friends and relatives coming from outside the village, Knossians become “unofficial” but knowledgeable guides and the fact that they have to pay an entrance fee in order to enter the site is pointed out as almost absurd; the “topographies of the homeland” (Leontis 1995) change not only according to their makers but also according to their users and readers.

Finally, the monument is also entwined with certain locals’ tender memories and personal stories. Some old residents talk about the times when there was no fence around the palace. This period appears as “an era of innocence”: at that time the state used to trust the locals to “look after their heritage”. Other Knossians remember the simple knocked-up enclosure that was put up as protection at a later phase: it was full of passages and all children could get in and play. These long past days are recalled as a time of a closer relationship with the monument, very different from the current situation of imposed discipline. After the description of his numerous problems with the Archaeological Service, Giorgos Perakis, a Knossian in his sixties recounts the moments of his childhood that he “spent amongst the ruins”:

*Just think that Knossos was without protective fences; it was a free place... we used to go in there in the evenings... it was there that we played our games as children...*

*And, you know, we never stepped on the walls...in those times there was no fear and no illicit trade of antiquities.*

The stones and walls of Knossos evoke memories that reflect local people's encounters with the much venerated and admired monument until the surveillance of the antiquities was established alongside that of their lives. But, anyway, nowadays the site is mainly a source of problems and the fence that protects the palace excludes it from the village's life: the ruins are neither visible nor immediately accessible, as they used to be. The official "landscaping" of the area and the people's distance from the "palace" signify the gap between Minoan Knossians and the contemporary ones, between the nation's idealised values and the local needs – in other words, between official Minoan *history*, the starting point of the Greek and European history, and the few hundred individual Knossian *stories*.



## **CONCLUSIONS**

*Anywhere, everywhere, people understand their world in subtle, contradictory and changeable ways. Anywhere/everywhere some people's understandings are valued more highly than others.*

Bender 2002: 137

Monuments are often presented as static and enduring symbols immersed in inert landscapes. In reality, things may differ significantly. The symbolic iconography of permanence characterising most of the representations of Knossos is only one perspective through which the monument is viewed and understood. In fact, it is the perspective through which the island's symbolic, educational and economic capital is promoted and strengthened, one that summarises the meaning of Knossos as proposed to tourists by archaeologists and the Greek state ideology. Yet, contrary to the messages embedded in such "innocent", abstracted and allegedly neutral images, Knossos is a "site and outcome of social, political and economic struggle" (cf. Lefebvre in Graham et al. 2000: 75). Formulated by antagonistic practices and scopes, the landscape of Knossos accepts continuous intercessions on its physical surface.

As a matter of fact, the a-chronic and highly idealistic view of the Minoan environment suppresses the concrete temporality and specificities of local people's lives. Knossians argue that what the state wants to show as beautiful remains of the past is actually the space of their hopes for comfortable houses for them and their children, as well as an opportunity for economic development. The exceptional and unique elements of Minoan Knossos, objectified in the official reading of its landscape, combat against the mortal, the trivial and the banal aspects of life of a few people who consider Knossos to be their own as well.

The imprint of the locals on the area, i.e., the construction and expansion of buildings and the use in them of "non- traditional" materials, contravene the symbolic meaning as well as the assumed aspect of the area in Minoan times. This

seems totally opposed to the taste and the concerns of the archaeologists and some “intellectuals” who insist on the preservation of a supposedly timeless and unchanging Cretan tradition. In other words, it is opposed to those who support the national discourse and/or have the necessary cultural capital – to use Bourdieu’s familiar terms – to make the *distinction* (1992) between the aesthetically appropriate elements of the Knossian landscape, on the one hand, and the vulgar and inappropriate ones, on the other. Apparently, Knossians are not included in this social category.

Several practices are employed in order to preserve the historical character of the landscape (or rather its preferred aspect). Surveillance, the constant threat of punishment, the difficulties placed on any local demand, the emphasis given by the Archaeological Service in particular aesthetic standards regarding people’s houses and shops and the encouragement of some specific uses of the land (e.g., viticulture) that project an uninterrupted relationship of Crete with nature are some of the strategies followed in order to officially “model” the area.

Yet in practice any such “monumental” approach is implemented in a way that is far from clear, straightforward and unquestionable. All relevant strategies employed by the state entail the participation not only of archaeologists but also of numerous other bureaucrats and social agents, including of course the Knossian population. Although they accept the “sacred” and immensely symbolic character of the Minoan heritage, all of them also act in relation to multiple alliances, diverse local interests and aesthetic principles, appropriations of the archaeologists’ vocabulary, as well as obligations and social bonds that tie people together, bringing “social and monumental time” (Herzfeld 1991) into a constant interplay. In it, social experience and the official rhetoric of the past mutually define and affect each other

As much as possible Knossians resist the bureaucratic practices of a characteristically nationalist ideology which ends up limiting their property rights. In their criticism of state power, often formed “behind the back of the dominant” (Scott, 1990: xii), i.e., of the Archaeological Service, Knossians discursively negotiate the laws, the state’s authoritative discourse and the existing power relations. The expression of their complaints and the description of their living conditions allow

them to position themselves in a complex network of social connections and to resist this imposed situation often by always setting the nation-state's rhetoric about tradition and history in relation to the time, place and addressee of their discourse.

Thus, the landscape of Knossos itself objectifies broader dilemmas dominating Greek social identity: tradition and modernity, past and present, the local and the national. The very existence of the archaeological boundaries (fences, enclosures, the limits of the First and Second Archaeological Zones, etc) are linked to a long list of antithetical pairs of related notions which are complementary to each other and work in continuous interaction: tradition and modernity, beauty and ugliness, structures and strategies, images of the city and the countryside, collective and individual quests, places for local use and landscapes meant for tourist consumption and national self-representation.

The obvious lack of balance between them reflects the modern Greek reality, always captured by the complex play between self-knowledge and self-display, between the global and the local aspects of its cultural role (see Herzfeld 1987, Just 1995, cf. Yalouri 2001). The tension between the need to preserve the monuments, on the one hand, and to secure local people's rights, on the other, is proof of the failure of the state to apply its hegemonic vision of the past and also to persuade, in practice, citizens of the truth of its rhetoric. Greece trumpets the importance of its national heritage while actually doing very little to protect it efficiently and, at the same time, to be fair towards the people who live in the shadow of its glorious monuments.

In relation to this "generalisation" of the notion of history occurring in the country, M. Herzfeld has remarked that in Greek, the definite article [always put in front of a noun], i.e., *the* history ("*i istoria*") "implies a conflation so total, so schematic, that it is in fact entirely a-historical" (1987: 43). To this effect, the continuous and generic schematisation of history ends up in its annulment (*ibid*). In fact, in Knossos the state ideology, as employed in the Knossian landscape, attempts to turn the place into an almost a-historical, abstract and generic museum space. Knossians, however, *are still* there. Given the bureaucratic inability to "cleanse" the area of their presence and their modern-looking "matters" as has occurred in other heritage sites, locals persistently negotiate their living conditions at the place where they were born and

raised. Together with archaeologists and local authorities they remain active agents in a landscape which is all but static and monumental.

## *Chapter 6*

### *ARCHANES:*

#### *THE ROLE OF THE MINOAN PAST TO A CRETAN VILLAGE*

*What was Archanes thirty years ago? An introverted little village, ugly and unknown to most people. Its archaeological treasures had not yet been discovered nor did the village have its useful infrastructure that makes life so much easier for us today. Although as a child I often played amidst the ancient stones, I did not pay attention to the all-so-important discoveries that the archaeologist's pickaxe brought to light; discoveries so important that Archanes had been described as the "Versailles" of Knossos.*

*Now that I am old enough to view things differently, I can see that our little town is much more beautiful and comfortable, at least externally. Whenever I go to Heraklion I can make out that regardless of the years gone by, this city still occupies the top place in Greece as far as bad taste is concerned. And I can declare, neither with fear nor passion, that Archanes today is "the Paris" of Heraklion County!*

An Archaniote librarian introducing a photographic album  
on Archanes to a local audience

Archanes is a large village or – as it is also often referred to – “a little town” in the Temenos Province in the hinterland of Crete. It is situated at the edge of a lush valley, 15 kilometres south of the city of Heraklion and the north coast and a little less than 10 kilometres from Knossos.

Viticulture is the main economic activity of its nearly 4,000 inhabitants. Since the early years of the twentieth century, Archaniotes have been involved in the production and trade of local grape varieties and wines, cultivating the huge lands

left by the Turks when Crete became autonomous. These vineyards yielded great harvests and exceptional economic affluence. It was then that the Archaniotes built their imposing mansions, the *archondika*, many of which are still standing today. The then accumulated wealth allowed the villagers to benefit from the existence of a local stone, at the time an expensive building material, around which several local stories and pride have revolved.

Contrary to what is happening in the rest of Crete – where traditional architecture is being replaced by modern buildings in order to meet the needs of locals and tourists – in Archanes many of these old *archondika* have been not only preserved but also restored. This was made possible during the 1990s and the early 2000s. With considerable funds obtained from the European Union in the context of the its cultural politics and meticulous efforts made by the local authorities, an extensive conservation project of house restoration and renovation of public spaces was carried out, which changed the aspect of the village and highlighted its “traditional” features. Not accidentally, it is argued in this chapter, this “discovery of the past” comes at a critical moment for the future of agriculture in the area.

Archanes is now singled out from the rest of Crete. It has acquired an excellent reputation, not only in nearby Heraklion but also on the rest of the island, as a “lively, clean, traditional and beautiful”<sup>1</sup> village; it has become an important place even outside Crete, among Greeks who have heard of it one way or another, among academic circles and, inevitably, among visitors, although the village is not (yet) a must-see destination.

The restoration of “traditional Archanes” and the cultural revival occurring at the village has been accompanied by the discovery of impressive archaeological remains in the area. A significant number of Minoan sites have been unearthed in and around the settlement. The centre of Minoan Archanes – located underneath the modern village – the cemetery at the nearby hill of Fourni and the sanctuaries of Mt Juktas and Anemospilia are some of the ancient sites that received extensive coverage in the

---

<sup>1</sup> From the tourist website <http://www.cretetravel.com/Features/Archanes> (acc. 13-12-2006).

local and national media during the 1990s and the early 2000s, and are locally deemed as “a substantial evidence of the timeless significance of the settlement”.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter is inspired by the three distinctive groups of local material culture already mentioned: the old – now restored – houses, the agricultural production (and the related rural landscape) and, finally, the significant antiquities found in Archanes dated to the Minoan period. In all three categories, strong notions of tradition are entangled, which shape and are shaped by a distinct Archaniote identity. The cultural qualities now locally noticed in these entities raise issues with regard to the local negotiation of what is considered Archaniote tradition, its representation, its consumption, as well as its implications on local collective memory.

The words of the local librarian in the opening quote suggest that the importance and publicity given to the changed face of the village are connected to its archaeological treasures. What are the content and meaning and, mainly, the social use of all these now highly appreciated ancient objects? In what way are these ancient finds related to the other expressions of material culture? What is their position in local people’s thoughts and actions? Bearing these questions in mind, in the pages to follow I shall attempt to explore the role of the Archaniote archaeological heritage found in a series of locally specific social processes, all of which are related to the new image of the village.

---

<sup>2</sup> From the text “Archanes through the Centuries” that accompanied the Archaniote candidacy for the “best restored village in Europe” award (see below in this chapter).

## 1. THE PLACE

### I. LIFE IN THE VILLAGE

Archanes is perched at an altitude of 380 metres above sea level. Hills of variable height surround it, covered, as far as the eye can see, by vineyards and a smaller number of olive groves (Fig. 66). The abundant vegetation is extended throughout cultivated fields on the lower parts of Mt Juktas, lying in the west (see map Fig. 68).

The houses – built above the centre of a Minoan town – are very close to each other and amphitheatrically embrace a rather steep hill. Most public functions are performed on the relatively flat piece of land between this hill and Mt Juktas. The post office, two bank branches, the telecommunication centre and many tavernas and coffee-houses that attract visitors and local youngsters are on the main square, which is stone-paved (like many of the back streets) and has pleasant displays of plants and trees.

There are two central roads. The larger one is located along the covered section of a creek, known simply as “The River” (*O Potamos*). Its width has allowed the recent construction of a summer open-air cinema, a kindergarten, the centre of the local health services and a meeting-place for the elderly – all buildings painted in bright colours – and also the bus station, which serves the connection between Archanes and Heraklion.

The second, much smaller road lies at the heart of the village’s social and economic life. It crosses the local market, where most shops and coffee-houses (*kafenias*) for the locals are situated, and then continues until the old primary school, a historical building that marks the entrance to Archanes for those coming from Heraklion. Not accidentally, many of the most impressive *archondika* are on this axis, called locally “the nice road” (“*o kalos o dromos*”), so that passing visitors could always admire the wealth and good taste of some prominent Archaniote families.



Since the late nineteenth century, the place has been divided into six major neighbourhoods (see maps Fig. 69-71): *Vorna* (“Northern”), *Pezoulia* (“Stone Terraces” because of the stony, step-like terrain), *Troullos* (“Dome”, for it is located in the central, curved part of the hillside), *Manili* (in the local dialect “Bracelet” – describing the once semi-circular form of the houses) and *Koutsounari* (“Water Pipe”, for the river’s waters were once collected here). All of them have been rural in terms of the inhabitants’ basic professional activity whereas there has been no distinction between rich and poor areas. With the exception of the “nice road”, all quarters have had mixed population, with one or more *archondika* standing next to more modest residences.

The only neighbourhood with a clearly distinct population in terms of origins and economic status was *Sinikismos*, i.e. “the settlement”. It was created in the 1920s on the west bank of *Potamos*, until then part of the countryside. Resembling other similar “settlements” around Greece, it was a quickly built utilitarian cluster that sheltered the refugees who arrived here after the end of the Asia Minor War in 1922.

Unlike other villages and towns in Crete where neighbourhoods and localities are named according to the rules and customs of patrilinear social organisation, the Archanote place names originate from quite different characteristics of the natural, built up and “practiced” landscape.<sup>3</sup> They describe geographical features, practical activities, the local geomorphology, or they simply refer to churches and chapels.<sup>4</sup> Finally some of them bear the memory of the Turkish presence in the village (e.g. *Tourkogitonia*, i.e. Turkish Quarter, *Tzami*, i.e. “Mosque”, at the place of a mosque demolished in 1897, see Tzombanaki 2002: 51) and some other historical events.

The village has its own archaeological museum – opened in 1993 – two folklore museums, a meeting place for youngsters, a cultural centre, a municipal gym and a

---

<sup>3</sup> Patrilinear Cretan societies encourage the clustering of a lineage’s agnates in the same neighbourhood (see Herzfeld 1983: 157, Tsantiropoulos 2004, also Saunier 1980). In contrast, in Archanes a married couple can settle *anywhere* in the village, depending on the availability of a dowry house or a plot for the construction of a new house. Married siblings and their parents can therefore be dispersed throughout the entire area of Archanes.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. “Patitiria”, wine-presses, “Dexameni”, cistern, “Ryaki”, creek, “Krioneri”, cold water from the name of an old coffee-shop, “Myristis”, place with flowers and pleasant smells, “Monastiriaka”, monastery properties belonging to the church, etc.

swimming pool – all inaugurated during the last ten years – and of course, the agricultural cooperative (founded in 1909), the war memorial surrounded by the statues of Archaniote patriots, and extended wine factories. Two major churches with baroque Venetian-style decorations made of stone (Fig. 72), the cathedral of St. Nikolaos and that of the Virgin Mary complete the ensemble of public buildings.

Life here starts early in the morning. At the market, men gather before dawn, especially during the periods of agricultural activity. The coffee-shops open at about 6 o'clock to serve the first coffee of the day to local labourers. In recent years the market has become an early morning meeting place also for migrant workers who are employed temporarily in farming or building. Most jobs are completed by one o'clock: shopping, exchanges, morning visits. Even the male pensioners, who spend their time in the coffee-shops sitting in a row that allows them to control all other people's movements, go home for lunch and rest. Public life has its second start in the afternoon: stores and coffee-shops reopen, children go out for extra lessons or to play, women have time for relaxed visits to each other's homes and the local youth pay their customary visits to the trendy cafeterias recently opened in the village square. In summer, life continues till late on the main square where tourists and Herakliotes come for dinner or to attend cultural events.

The local council (which since 2000 also covers the territory of the small villages of Kato Archanes and Patsides) is one of only three in Greece to have received the ISO 9001, i.e., a certification of the high quality services it offers to people. The good reputation of the local authorities in obtaining and handling EU funds, some of which impact positively on the broader area of the Heraklion region, its efficient administration and the undertaking of public works (among which several involve cultural and ecological matters<sup>5</sup>) has led to the donation of significant additional amounts of money to the council for cultural, sport and social purposes even from people who are not of Archaniote origin. Taking all the above into consideration, it is perhaps unsurprising that Archanes has become one of the most famous villages in

---

<sup>5</sup> A conference centre, a wine tasting place, a visitors' centre about the local wine production and a "traditional coffee-shop" are under construction in the locale of the historical hotel "Zeus" at the south exit of the village.

the Heraklion county, while comparisons between the authorities of Heraklion and those of Archanes are often made in favour of the latter.

## **II. MT JUKTAS**

*Motionless and still lies the Great Jupiter,  
Your all so strange Juktas, looking at the high seas  
[...]  
Stories and legends have been buried in your soil  
Religions and spring waters, an old world  
But today in your Juktas, thousands of new worlds  
Live and are nourished, worlds brought by Another God.*

Poem by the local amateur historians Christinidis and Bounakis  
(1997 [1970]: 9, my translation)

Mt Juktas is the landmark of Archanes. Its imposing shape casts a shadow over the village and it seems that life here has always run in visual, economic and symbolic relation to this particular feature of the natural landscape.

Compared to other Cretan mountains, it is not particularly high (811m). The upper part of the range is distinctive for its rocky ledges, and caves have been formed by the sculpturing power of the winds all around, particularly on its west side, remote and wild, housing rare flora and wild birds.

The mountain is visible from both Knossos and the north coast of Crete, even from the boats that enter the port of modern Heraklion. As a marker of the area, it was included in almost all engravings made by European travellers to Crete since 1415 (Tzombanaki 2002). When seen from a distance, its pointed peaks are reminiscent of a male head in repose (Fig. 67), a fact that explains the adjective “anthropomorphic” that often accompanies its name (*Juktas, to anthropomorpho vouno*). This is perhaps also the basis for the widespread belief that Zeus was buried here. Since Renaissance times, the association of Juktas with the ancient god has been so strong that many erudite travellers have searched for his “grave” (Christinidis and Bounakis 1997: 15-

19) and some Archaniotes today repeat the legend, thus lending some vague credibility to it.

The mountain also played a very important role in the life of the Minoan inhabitants of the area for a series of important archaeological sites and ritual objects have been found on its slopes and in its caves. Its waters supported the thriving Archaniote agriculture for centuries. Through a hydraulic system that crossed the Knossano Gorge, the water was driven to the palace of Knossos. Even in more recent periods (Venetian and Ottoman), Juktas remained the main water source for the people of Heraklion through constructed aqueducts, still visible at the entrance and the heart of the gorge above.

At its top, the Orthodox church of the Transfiguration of Christ (*"Afendis Christos"*) stands a few metres away from a Minoan "peak sanctuary". On the 6<sup>th</sup> August, the day of the church's festival, thousands of people spend the night on the mountain and for Archaniotes all over the world this is considered a day of return to the village. Demonstration of respect to the Christian faith and in particular to this church is commonly considered the reason for the unusual orientation of most houses towards the west (Doundoulaki-Oustamanolaki 1996: 39).

For these reasons, Juktas is often referred to as *a sacred mountain*. Its sacredness embraces all periods of human presence spanning from the Minoan times to nowadays as it becomes evident through relevant myths, legends and worship practiced locally. Comparisons between Jesus and *Cretagenes* Zeus, similar to that implied in the above quoted folk poem, are often made and many local *mantinades* poetically mix the transfiguration of Jesus with the legend of the annual birth and death of the ancient father of the Gods.

### **III. HISTORY AND ECONOMY**

The history of the village – which has been inhabited uninterruptedly since the Bronze Age – is directly connected to that of its nearby urban centres.<sup>6</sup> In Minoan and Roman times, it was Knossos that constituted the major point of reference for the Archaniote agricultural, commercial and administrative practices. Knossos was also the link for the communication of Archanes with other chief places on the north coast, the Aegean islands and beyond. In more recent times, the role of Knossos was taken over by the Arabic and Byzantine city of *Chandax*, which in the Venetian period was called *Candia*, later *Megalo Kastro* (“Great Castle”) and finally *Heraklion*.

For the Arabs who settled in Crete in the ninth century AD and mainly for the Venetian (1210-1669) and Ottoman (1669-1899) rulers of Heraklion, the village was a significant resource of farming products at a close distance. In Ottoman times, it had the title of “imperial village” (Tzombanaki 2002: 23) for its lands were owned by the Turkish government. The local population used to earn its living by working for members of the Ottoman elite.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the tendency for social re-organisation and partial recognition of the civil and religious rights of many Balkan citizens of the Ottoman Empire affected Crete and Archanes in particular, especially through the introduction of a community law which allowed the development of a self-governed administrative system. The changes that occurred at a legal level assured basic rights for the non-Muslim Ottoman subjects and allowed the gradual development of a Christian, Greek-speaking bourgeoisie of merchants and intellectuals, who, later on, became the local elite. This period, especially the late nineteenth century, has left Archanes with important memories focused on several anti-Ottoman revolts that

---

<sup>6</sup> The name of the village in its singular form, i.e., “Archana”, is mentioned only once on an ancient inscription dated to the fifth century BC, found in the city of Argos in the Peloponnese. All archaeologists and local historians emphasise the fact that modern Archaniotes, during informal discussions, use the singular form of their village’s name, just like in ancient times. (see Tzombanaki 2002: 15).

took place in the area. During the Cretan Revolution of 1897, the most ferocious battles against the Turks were fought in the neighbouring hills and the village was the first place on Crete to be freed from Ottoman control.

A considerable number of books and treatises on Archaniote actions in the struggle against the Ottomans have been published locally (see Christinidis 1997) while conferences on the topic are quite regular. Moreover, of great discursive significance locally has been the role of Archaniote patriots in the Second World War, the Battle of Crete in 1941 and their collaboration with members of the British anti-Nazi resistance. Their struggle culminated in 1944 with the kidnapping of the Nazi governor of Crete, General Kreipe, by Patrick Leigh Fermor, then leader of the British resistance on Crete, and Cretan partisans.

The combination of patriotic military action in the past with an admirable and peaceful progress occurred in the post-war period is often noted in local discussions and presentations of the village. Two local intellectuals describe the recent history of Archanes and the character of their fellow villagers as follows:

*At the dawn of the twentieth century Archanes was ready to start a new struggle, the one for a peaceful life. The rifle was reverently being stowed away in the most secure, the most secret part of an Archaniote house and would be kept there. But there would be another time when other weapons [...] would be taken out: a great and heroic time for Crete, on May 20<sup>th</sup> 1941. They would be used to resist to Hitler's furious hordes. Now it is the spade, the ploughshare, the pruning hook that step forward and take over. Trees and vineyards are being planted all over the devastated land. Greenery abounds everywhere. New houses are being built, new roads are being designed and the Archaniote sweat flows creatively on every stretch of ground.*

*[...]*

*So in a very original as much as absurd way, Archanes combines the fierceness and roughness of a battlefield with the gentleness and the tenderness of a wealth producing area. (Christinidis and Bounakis 1997: 113 and 13, my translation)*

Thus the participation in numerous revolts and heroic acts of resistance against different conquerors of Crete as well as the ability of the Archaniotes to produce fine agricultural products and transform their village into a wealthy society that enjoys the goods of peaceful economic development constitute what is considered important to be remembered from the relatively recent past of the place.

The end of the Second World War was followed by a difficult time of poverty and migration, accompanied by the general neglect of rural areas by most Greek governments. Yet Archanes quickly reappeared on the international scene of grape and wine trading, and economic prosperity re-emerged discouraging migration to urban centres. Between 1955 and 1985, the village had the largest agricultural cooperative in Greece. The success of the Archaniote type of vineyard, the “krevatina”, established the village as the “mother of Cretan vines” (“*abelomana tis Kritis*”, Doundoulaki-Oustamanolaki 1984: 15)<sup>7</sup> and its local grape variety called “rosaki” was exported to European, Asian and American markets until at least the mid-1980s, when a destructive vine louse destroyed Archaniote production for years and caused the first economic blow.

Nowadays, viticulture is undergoing a gradual decline, although this is less evident here than in other agricultural areas of Greece.<sup>8</sup> Local farming is dependent on subsidies from the European Union and the fields with the *rosaki* grapes, proudly mentioned in tourist leaflets, folk poems and mantinades, as well as in historical and archaeological books on Archanes, have been reduced considerably. The painstaking cultivation of vines is gradually being replaced by that of olive trees, since it is simpler as well as less risky and time-consuming. Despite the unfavourable EU guidelines concerning the practice of agriculture, the abandonment of old cultivations and the general shift towards new ones, farming remains for most

---

<sup>7</sup> Most Archaniotes talk proudly about their *krevatinas*. It is the impressive result of their painstaking work, the place of pleasant family moments – especially at harvest time – and an excellent place for a summer sleep in the shade of the vines.

<sup>8</sup> Statistics are especially revealing: the number of farmers in the country has decreased from 58% of the active population in 1961 to less than 14% in 2003 (see Vardakis 2004).



Archaniote residents a basic economic activity,<sup>9</sup> which, as we shall see, has had great symbolic significance in the local representations of Archanes after the completion of the conservation programme.

---

<sup>9</sup> According to the official employment data provided by the Local Council Office, 70% of the economically active population are farmers. The farmland covers a total area of 17,000m<sup>2</sup> with 1,130 agricultural enterprises. 80% of them are owned by people *exclusively* occupied in agriculture.

#### **IV. ARCHANES BETWEEN THE URBAN AND THE RURAL**

In closing this long description of Archaniote history, economy and environment, a note has to be made about the village's culture during the twentieth century in relation to its geographical position, its resources and local people's choices, since all this constitutes the broader socio-economic framework of the current significance of the material heritage in the village.

Archanes has always combined two apparently opposite elements and ways of life: urban and rural. First of all, this combination is evident in the local economic structures and the practice of farming together with commercial professional activities within the village. Already at the beginning of the twentieth century, next to the basically agriculturalist population, there was a notable number of merchants, technicians and shop-owners. Until the Second World War, this special social group had made fortunes on a par with those of some landowners. Many pursued higher education for their children, especially in the fields of medicine and law since this meant a higher social (and economic) status for the whole family. The resulting social stratification as well as the easy access to resources and ideas circulating in Heraklion brought aspects of a somewhat bourgeois lifestyle to Archanes. Picnics in the countryside, parties with European music, basic education for a large segment of the population, a local electricity company, the first in Crete, running water in the houses, a hotel, cinemas and performances with renowned theatre groups arriving at the village were incorporated into a deeply rural setting.<sup>10</sup>

This urban-rural combination has also been reflected in the local kinship patterns. Marriages between Archaniote women and Herakliote men have been very common, thus advancing the social exchange of habits and ideas between the two areas (see also the appendix for a more detailed presentation of Archaniote kinship relations). The relations of ritual kinship also bear the imprint of economic transactions between the village and the city. Often a Herakliote merchant who traded Archaniote

---

<sup>10</sup> Memories of all these activities are regularly presented by the locals in the magazine "ARCHANES" published by the local "KAPI", i.e., the Cultural Centre for Senior Citizens.

wines overseas became the godfather of a newly born Archaniote baby, this way also consolidating, apart from a symbolic bond, a relationship of trust between two or more economic partners.

Even the interchangeable use of the term “village” and “town” by the locals is evocative of this urban-rural mixture. The feeling and widespread opinion that Archanes is a village lies at the heart of most local references to the place – and this is the reason I decided to use this term in the thesis. It is a term certainly associated with the small (compared to a city) size of the settlement,<sup>11</sup> the closed or even provincial mentality of a confined society, and the nostalgic tone people often employ when they refer to their birthplace. On the other hand, the rather large size of the settlement (compared, this time, to many Greek villages), its economic and administrative structures and the noted developments in many fields make the term *town* more appropriate in some cases. On formal occasions, e.g., in official letters, public speeches and all sorts of commemorative events, Archaniotes and their representatives present their place, especially to non-Archaniotes, differently. Then the small, close-minded rural village becomes a sizeable, economically, administratively and historically important town.

---

<sup>11</sup> The Municipality of Archanes occupies 7,965 acres and has a population of 4,548 residents. According to the census of 2001 (data provided by the Greek National Statistical Organisation - see the official site of the Municipality, [www.archnaes.gr](http://www.archnaes.gr)), 3,860 of them live in the village.

## **V. ARCHANES AS “A SPECIAL PLACE”: COLLECTIVE REPRESENTATIONS**

The significant historical and economic role that Archanes played on the Cretan scene during the twentieth century is familiar to the island's people. Yet what has made Archanes very special in both local and broadly regional accounts is the relevant prestige that the place has acquired through its conservation programme. This is the image of a village that pays respect to its traditions – of a place that acknowledges the symbolic importance of its material heritage and culture in general.

Undoubtedly, this discourse on “the special character of Archanes” has a political side. For example, on the occasion of the two EU awards granted to the village in 2000, that of the 2<sup>nd</sup> best restored village in Europe and that of the 1<sup>st</sup> place in long term development prospects, the mayor presented to journalists the “upgrade” of his hometown as follows:

*Mayor: The aesthetic upgrade of Archanes is unique all over Greece... [H]aving solved the infrastructure problems, we were given this great honour, which is also great for Greece, to be able to compete [for this award] with other European villages that have already proceeded to the improvement of their citizens' lives and the development that we all envisage for a better tomorrow; for us and for our children...*

*Journalist: How was this vision created?*

*Mayor: We started off as a team in 1981 full of love for our hometown. All the characteristics of Archanes are traditional. We have about 5,000 years of history and culture that is hard to find in other villages of Crete and we wanted to develop that. (emphasis added)<sup>12</sup>*

---

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.hit360.com/italian/special/article>. acc. 13-12-2006.

The fact that Archanes presents itself as building its current and future welfare on a deeper understanding of its traditions and its conservation project is justified as a logical consequence of a 5,000-year-long local culture. Not accidentally, the most frequently cited phrase by the local authorities is that “there is no past without future”.<sup>13</sup>

The Archaniote authorities have often attracted the attention of local and sometimes national and international media. The mayor, aligned with the Socialist Party (PASOK), was elected for the same office four consecutive times (1990-2004), each time with a higher percentage of local votes that reached 80% – a level very unusual in Greece. The locals associate his popularity, based on the support offered to him by people of all party loyalties, mainly with the numerous public works completed in the village since the early 1990s and the fame that Archanes now enjoys. During my fieldwork, his profile had been consolidated to such an extent that even those who did not vote for him felt embarrassed to argue openly against him, fearing that this would be judged negatively.

With the same rhetorical style, this Archaniote politician in late 2004 moved to the European Parliament as MP, now acting on behalf of the whole island of Crete. His candidacy was humorously reported as that of “a Minoan man going to Europe”, a phrase implying his origins, his cultural background, as well as the long distance between his (modest) Cretan village and the (celebrated) Europe Union that the popular politician was called on to cover, although he had done so several times already: claiming European funds for Archaniote projects was what made the village “the best one (or the most beautiful one) in Europe”, as many locals told me, interpreting the meaning of the European awards.

Moreover, the village now serves as a model of administrative efficiency for many other small rural places in Greece, particularly those whose cultural heritage is considered important. The “Archaniote miracle” enjoys coverage in the Cretan media, on the web, in tourist guides and of course in all cultural and scientific events

---

<sup>13</sup> See the Municipality’s official web site, <http://www.archanes.gr/>, acc. 14-12-2006.

organised locally. Unsurprisingly then, it was announced on *Radio Crete*<sup>14</sup> that the local authorities' vision for 2020 is to secure the title of "cultural capital of Crete", ascribing to Archanes a primary symbolic position in representing the whole island.

Civic pride has crystallised around Archanes not only by its authorities but also by the Archaniote citizens. In particular, the cultural action of local intellectuals, mainly teachers, amateur historians and folklorists, has contributed a great deal to the consolidation of a positive collective image through the frequently evoked Archaniote roots in the past. The contribution of those people to local matters is now seen under a new light and thoroughly re-appreciated as the changes which occurred in the 1990s brought these individuals even greater local esteem.

During the public presentation of a photographic album on Archanes, the speaker, a philologist, connected Archanes's European awards to this particularly intense scholarly action:

*Archanes, which was awarded the 2<sup>nd</sup> European prize for its architecture, its nobility, its beauty, its history and its dazzling presence on the European scene, will be remembered eternally due also to the love many of its people have for it: they have ardently worked on its archaeological treasures, as well as on its inexhaustible wealth of folklore.*<sup>15</sup>

These words precisely introduce us to the recently formulated rhetoric of the village, which is also the focus of this chapter: ancient and folkloric wealth, scholarly action and cultural heritage have come to signify a unified tradition that has brought Archanes to the level of an admirable Cretan place of "European" standards. Unlike other places in Greece which can claim such a position only due to their ancient heritage, Archanes has all the above additional reasons, "condensed" into its material heritage, to be "eternally remembered".

---

<sup>14</sup> 10-5-2002, programme by the journalist Bogdanidis.

<sup>15</sup> Eleni Saatsaki-Plagiotaki, 22/11/2003. Local Newspaper "Patris", 3/12/2002 ([www.patris.gr](http://www.patris.gr), acc. 3/12/2002)

Mrs Fanouraki, herself a local teacher and folklorist who often reminds her fellow villagers of important moments, events, and habits of times past, believes that there is a strong local sense of responsibility towards the material culture of the past resulting from the special character of the Archaniote way of life and thinking:

*... I'm not speaking as a egotistical Archaniote; it is true, even specialists have said this as well, that the mentality, the quality of life and the way of living are different here from all other regions. So there has always been a terrible urge for hard work, a tendency towards progress. Events as well as dramatic performances used to take place here at a time when other places even lacked schools; cultural associations were founded [here] and this was not at all accidental. It didn't happen in other places, even in Heraklion where the population was much larger than that of Archanes. So, this is still the case nowadays. On the cultural side we are doing very well. [...] And I believe this is due to information provided to people who become conscious of their responsibility towards their ancestry as Archaniotes. Let's say that they feel that something really good is happening here, which makes their hometown distinct among others.*

Archanes therefore competes successfully even with the urban model of life. In the past it enjoyed things that were unknown or very little appreciated in the city of Heraklion. Even the frequent references to the scientific achievements of Archaniotes who, as early as the beginning of the twentieth century, received higher education and followed splendid careers in Greece or abroad, allude to the progressive character of the place for which Archaniotes can be collectively proud: a farming population usually has a much more limited access to university education than city residents have.

But the most frequently repeated topic concerning the importance of the place is directly related to its rural character and regards local farming. The intense cultivation of land and the high quality of the exported local products until the mid-1980s are focal points of discussion in the locals' self-representation. Besides, Archaniotes emphasise the fact that feverish activity which brought them an

extremely high net income did not change local mentality and sensitivities: the interest in local, national and international concerns remained the same. As a local grocer told me – in order to prove the extent of solidarity in the years of prosperity – “*Archanes was very rich and very communist*”. Until the early 1990s the communist party was so popular here that the village was humorously called “Little Moscow”.<sup>16</sup> This is often pointed out in many collective representations as further evidence that the accumulation of wealth does not necessarily mean selfishness and indifference to fellow people.

Archaniotes often argue that the uniqueness of their place is also proved by the fact that the young people do not prefer to move to Heraklion. This conscious decision to remain, live and work here makes an important difference from other rural places and again leads to inevitable comparisons with Heraklion in various fields.

Yet the simplest and perhaps most straightforward way in which Archanes was presented as special belongs to Michalis Fanourakis, a local man in his seventies, during a discussion we had in one of the village coffee-shops. His words exemplify it most convincingly:

*The place has dreams; it is not left alone to its fate. It has hopes; it is not withered...*

*I don't know if you've seen it, a little way down the road, there is a house with a huge bougainvillea in front of it. In this house lives the son of the man whom I'm going to tell you about. So this man who was 88 years old had a beautiful bitter-orange tree and one day he says to me: Mihalaki, I want you to come and graft the tree for me so that I can have lemons from it. Think of it! He was 88! So I did do what he asked me to. This is how a man should be. To start things and go wherever they take him, not to sit still and wonder about his fate. This man enjoyed his lemons and died a year and a half afterwards.*

---

<sup>16</sup> This tendency, given the overall political shift after 1989 from leftwing to more conservative political forces, remains strong in the village. In the recent elections for the prefect of the Heraklion region (October 2006), Archanes gave to the communist candidate the highest percentage in the region.



That man's lemon tree is still there to remind my informant of the true attitude to life. Examples like this connect the past and the present of the place and allow analogies with the glorious history of the village and its implication in everyday life practices. But before we move on to analyse the local debate about Archaniote heritage, we should have a brief overview of what this highly-valued material culture consists of.

## 2. THE MATERIAL HERITAGE

### I. MINOAN REMAINS

*Archanes has been renowned for the grapes grown in the region as well as for its wine. Now it is also renowned for its antiquities. The palatial building (most of which is still hidden under the village houses), if and when it is unearthed some day in the future, will be compared only to Knossos for its vigorous construction and to Phaistos for its refined lines... We know today the most significant prehistoric cemetery of the Aegean Sea in Fourni, a nearby hill... an actual lexicon of funeral architecture and rituals, with no parallel in the prehistory of the Aegean Sea.*

Sakellarakis 2003: 84-85 (my translation)

An alabaster spoon bearing an inscription in Linear A, now at the Heraklion Museum, was the first Minoan object discovered at Archanes. It was in 1912 and Stefanos Xanthoudides, a leading member of the Herakliote Educational Society, who published on the find, stressed the vital need for excavations in the village (Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 2002: 22), which was then expanding as a consequence of its economic development.

Yet the very restricted budget of the Greek Archaeological Service did not allow any further research until the late 1920s, when Evans became actively interested in the place. Evans bought a golden Minoan ring and some seals here that are now kept and displayed at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford (ibid.). He brought to light a few remains in the so-called Turkish Quarter (“Tourkogitonia”), where the palatial centre was to be unearthed after many decades by the archaeologists Yannis and Effie Sakellarakis (Fig. 73). Notwithstanding the limited evidence, Evans then put forward the view that Minoan Archanes was the “summer residence of King Minos” (ibid.).

In 1949, Spyridon Marinatos, General Curator of Antiquities, conducted the first systematic excavation at Vathypetro, 4 km south of the village. Amid an intensively cultivated land, he discovered the remains of what he called a “Minoan villa”, the

image of which has accompanied all symbolic references to Cretan agricultural traditions due to the olive press and the wine press discovered there (Fig. 74, 75). These finds led to the assumption that the building must have been a farmhouse belonging to a local ruler (“toparch”). In 1966, in a letter Marinatos sent to the Herakliote newspapers in order to publicise the importance of the place, he stated that “Archanes now stands on their own as a first class star in the archaeological constellation and will never lose this title...” (cited in Christinidis and Bounakis 1997 [1970]: 25).

Yet systematic excavations in the area both inside and outside the village have only been conducted since 1964 by the archaeologists Yannis and Effie Sakellarakis who brought to light apart from the palatial building, also rich tombs and funeral gifts at the cemetery on the nearby Fourni hill (Fig. 76, 77) and the Minoan temple of Anemospilia on Mt Juktas (Fig. 78), the one associated by the excavators with a ritual human sacrifice (see Fig. 79 and also above chapter 4).<sup>17</sup>

### **-Representing archaeological Archanes**

*What one feels when looking at the last archaeological finds at Archanes is soul-stirring and almost beyond words.*

(Appeared in the national newspaper “Eleftherotypia”, 18-11-2000: 41)

Within the framework of the local cultural politics inaugurated with the conservation project, the recent Archaniote antiquities found an apposite exhibition space in 1993 in a small local museum and will remain there until the new, larger and very ambitious archaeological museum of the village has been finished. The current museum is housed in a restored building used as a primary school at the beginning of the twentieth century (Fig. 80), a fact connoting the now general tendency in Archanes to view its ancient and its recent past through a unified representational

---

<sup>17</sup> For more information about the Archaniote archaeological sites see the Appendix.

perspective. The museum's small size, its free entrance and its informative style all contribute to making it a rather unusual example of a state archaeological display.

In thematic and explicitly didactic sections on death, worship and dwelling, food and farming activities, commerce, transport and contact with other places, the objects are interpreted through representations of the excavation's context, graphic reconstructions of the architectural structures and fresco fragments, and inserted pictures of relevant objects displayed elsewhere. Within an obviously anthropocentric approach to Archaniote society from Minoan to recent times, the exhibition attempts to place the objects in a framework of interrelated functions and practices, while it hints at some current agricultural traditions of the village for which there is abundant archaeological evidence in the Bronze Age.

During my fieldwork, the excavated remains of the "Minoan palatial building" in Tourkogitionia, today surrounded by modern inhabited houses, also became accessible to the public. Although the absence of open spaces around the excavation obviously reduces the impact of the site on the visitor, the interpretation of the remains relies on this very idea of this area being inhabited for a long time, and in particular this piece of land. With stone-made benches and walls from the early twentieth century and decorations with flowers and herbs growing on Mt Juktas, the overall presentation of the excavation is also based on this same idea of Archaniote style. Once again, attention is paid not only to the Minoan era but also to other historical periods that have left their signs here. Among them, the floor of a modern Archaniote house demolished for the continuation of the research has been intentionally maintained.

Finally, the guided tour organised annually at the end of each digging session aims to provide the locals with reliable information about the objects found in their land. This tour creates a personal bond between the archaeologists and the local people, very different from the previously analysed impersonal and sometimes hostile attitude towards the Archaeological Service and its practices as expressed by the people who happen to live above ancient cities.

The archaeologists working locally often publicise the importance of the Archanote discoveries. Already in 1967, Fourni was presented as “the most important cemetery in the Aegean Sea area in prehistoric times” (see Sakellarakis cited in Christinidis and Bounakis 1997 [1970]: 28). The emphasis on the unequalled significance of the Minoan finds was repeated not only in all books and descriptions of the cemetery until very recently but also in all popular presentations and references to the site thus reinforcing the assessment quoted above.

The use of specific terms in describing ancient remains is also interesting. The rather tentative term “palatial building” initially used to indicate the archaeological structure at Tourkogitionia gradually turned out to be a “palace”. The popularity of the term has been such, especially after the programme of traditional house conservation, that nowadays there is virtually no mention of the site outside academic circles without reference to “The Palace of Archanes”. As such, it is also described in most guidebooks, local history books, the official website of the local council, etc.

The categorical reproduction of sound characterisations of the Archanote excavation and finds came to the fore again during 2000, a little before the beginning of my fieldwork in the village, with the discovery of two rooms at the complex of Tourkogitionia. The national newspaper *Elftherotypia* announced on the cover of its magazine *Geo* (18-11-2000), that at Archanes “*Another Knossos has been discovered*” (Fig. 81) and that “*A palace with 99 rooms has come to light*”.<sup>18</sup> Thus the long research, which started in 1965, is currently presented as a “*major, recent and shattering discovery of another Minoan palace*”.

In sum, within the context of the great publicity that archaeological Archanes has received in recent years, both the cemetery at Fourni and the building at Tourkogitionia are seen as proving the royal status of their Minoan users. The recent archaeological finds are portrayed as being of (at least) equal importance to Knossos, bringing Evans’s old theory about King Minos’s summer residence back into the focus of local discussions.

---

<sup>18</sup> This is based on a probable calculation of the rooms on the assumed three floors of the “palace”.

## **II. THE ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE**

### **-The background of the Archaniote neoclassicism**

When Archanes gained its autonomy, the economic and commercial boom that followed brought cultural and social changes, also reflected in the local architecture. The Archaniote *archondika*, built between the waning years of the nineteenth century and 1935, combined Balkan rural elements – characteristic of the architecture in the times of the Ottoman Empire – with Venetian memories “borrowed” mainly by the nearby city of Heraklion and, above all, a pronounced neoclassicism. This was the dominant architectural style in Athens and most Greek urban centres and, since the independence of the Greek state in 1829, it had been a major expression of national identity with specific references to classical antiquity and the “enlightened” West” (Archanes Acts 1992).

The belated emergence of neoclassicism at Archanes signified not only the projection of Greekness locally and the symbolic beginning of a new era for the place but also the social prestige and taste of its wealthy residents (Tzombanaki 1992). The houses’ external surfaces employ elements reminiscent of monumental architecture: columns, big blocks of stone, symmetrical organisation of spaces, stone frames around gates, doors and windows (Fig. 82). In some cases, the frames form arches recalling the Venetian style (Fig. 83), also evident in the colours Archaniotes used to paint their houses.

As noted already, in Archanes, rural activities, culture and landscape are combined with practices and material culture that radiate bourgeois mentality and affluence. The structure of the *archondika* is the material expression of this double character of the Archaniote society: their interior is divided into two complementary parts, one related to farming and other rural activities, e.g., wine pressing, baking of food, open-air washing and the storage of oil, raki and wine and one intended for the other everyday needs of the family. An *archondiko* normally included living rooms and bedrooms decorated in a fin-de-siècle style, usually on the upper floor. Often, a special wooden floor and a small staircase constructed internally were meant as

additional galleried bedrooms under the timbered ceilings. Finally, the internal yard, which protected private life from the outsiders' eyes, was – and still is – an important part of the Archaniote house and a field of competition between Archaniote women in terms of decoration, cleanliness and abundance of plants, flowers and colours.

### **-1950-1990: The alterations**

Already in 1950, with a government decree Archanes was declared a “traditional architectural complex”. Mt Juktas and the hill of Fourni were also listed as “places of historical importance” (Syrmakizis et al. 1992: 38). Rules about the construction of new buildings and restrictions resulting from the existence of antiquities and the notable Byzantine churches in the area were agreed upon and applied in the last decades, each time to a different extent (ibid.). Especially at the quarter of Tourkogitionia where the “palatial building” was discovered, several old houses were “saved”: their owners were reluctant to demolish them since it was likely that antiquities would be found, leaving the owners without the permits to build new houses, at least in the same place. These legal clauses, however, did not stop some morphological changes that the village underwent after the Second World War. Especially in the 1970s and 1980s, various new structures were built, most of which did not comply with the above rules. In general, the government decree – but mainly practical problems and evaluations of the circumstances – discouraged demolitions. However, the maintenance costs of the old houses, some of which are of considerable size, has been too high for many to afford while the use of stone for the various repairs was usually very expensive. Thus many houses were abandoned or left to decay by Archaniotes who had moved out of Archanes, while those Archaniotes who inhabited the old houses found some simple and relatively inexpensive ways to maintain their properties which, in effect, significantly altered their original aspects.

### **-1992-2002: The restorations and their significance**

This situation changed drastically in 1992, when the local authorities of the village, having obtained a European fund, asked the Polytechnic School of Athens to undertake the first phase of a house restoration programme according to specific aesthetic and social principles (Archanes Acts 1992).

The programme then justified the preservation of traditional architecture as an attempt to save a local expression of historical memory and prove locally “the cultural continuity of the Greek nation” (see below), despite the relatively limited interest shown in this direction by the post-war Greek governments. The architect Benetaki, responsible for the restoration of traditional settlements, explained the national significance of the project as follows:

It is necessary to protect traditional settlements, to preserve and make the most of our architectural inheritance... in order to preserve our historical memory as a people. Cultural continuity of the historical course of our nation is a substantial element of its presence [...] Because of their authenticity, these [settlements] **constitute the tokens of a civilisation and their variable expressions compose the elements of our historical legacy and our national identity.** (1992: 13, my translation, emphasis added)

While for the state the value of preserving the perceived authenticity of local architecture lies in the demonstration of the nation’s cultural continuity, the support of the project offered by the European Union had rather different meanings. Since the early 1990s, the EU has encouraged local development through the financing of activities and projects that support local traditions, cultural expressions and the preservation of material heritage (see Deltsou 2003: 216) as part of a European cultural identity that synthesises diverse local particularities in a transnational construct. Archanes has been a pioneer in benefiting from this aspect of EU cultural politics, building the sense of a distinctive community which is traditional and European at the same time.



The project focused on houses, traditional or not, and communal spaces. It pursued the creation of an overall image that integrated the natural environment of Archanes, as a crucial part of its history and its economy.

From a morphological point of view, the initiative aimed at protecting the houses from physical decay as well as restoring them to their “original” aspect. This aspect was chosen as their most beautiful, authentic and valuable one.

Major emphasis was put on the neoclassicist features of the houses, especially on the use and role of stone. Limestone blocks defining the four corners of the houses as well as elaborate masonry, arches (Fig. 84), columns, pillars, cornices, window and door frames (“*pelekia*”) were uncovered underneath multiple layers of plaster. Their presence was highlighted in all restored buildings while rich colours thought of as traditional were used to paint the plaster, making the presence of the cream-coloured stone even more evident. Decorations made of marble, hand-made iron railings and wooden structural elements (mainly gates, doors and windows of all types) were also restored, while those irreversibly decayed or destroyed, were replaced by new ones made in the old style and of the same materials as in the past. The project also involved the removal of constructions added to the houses after the Second World War. Materials such as plastic, concrete and metal (mainly aluminium) used in the place of wood as well as “provisional” metal doors, balconies, windows, shop windows, signs, etc. were treated as aesthetically disharmonious, contradicting the notion of Archaniote tradition, falsifying or spoiling the aspect of the whole village (Syrmakezis et al. 1992: 40). The study also made provision for the colours the owners should use to paint their houses or specific parts of them.

### **-The performance of tradition on communal spaces**

*After that [i.e., the restoration of the local buildings] we removed the aluminium from the houses of the village, we added wood and ceramic tiles on the roofs and we **painted them in Minoan colours.***

Interview with the Mayor of Archanes<sup>19</sup>  
(emphasis added)

However, the most informative (for our purposes) part of the restoration programme regards the interventions on recent constructions, deemed, in architectural terms, either as “indifferent” or even as a “cacophony” in a traditional settlement (Syrmakezis et al 1992: 42).

The staging of Archaniote authenticity entailed the undertaking of multiple actions, in order to make these structures look “less modern” and also to create a nostalgic feeling for old Archanes, although some of the created spaces never existed in the past. Large reinforced concrete blocks of flats have received special treatment in order to look smaller and not cause an unpleasing contrast to the restored houses. The effect of concrete has been minimised and incorporated into the historical nucleus of the village through extensions of wood and rustic style roofs with ceramic tiles. Window frames made out of plaster are added to concrete buildings in order to imitate the effect of limestone. Wooden doors, windows, shop windows and shutters, and an intelligent use of contrasting colours similar to those of the restored buildings attempted to incorporate all recent buildings into a “traditional-looking” whole. Even illegal constructions such as metal roofed balconies, which could not be demolished due to the estimated high cost, have been replaced with box-like wooden constructions vaguely reminiscent of roofed balconies of the Ottoman era (Fig. 85) and producing a neo-traditional architectural style.

Not only were the “modern style” and the employed materials in some recent buildings considered as contradicting the traditional character of Archanes but even

---

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.hit360.com/italian/special/article>, acc. 13-12-2006.

some of the functions that they performed, such as housing of a garage (Syrmakezis et al. 1992: 42). The traditional identity of the village was also seen to be in sharp contrast to other indispensable technical constructions serving modern needs (ibid.: 41). This assessment led to the removal of antennas from the roofs and the replacement of the electricity network with a new one, which is underground, therefore does not disturb the general aesthetics.

Without exception, all shops replaced their signs with wooden ones. They are hand-painted with nostalgic images and motifs and their calligraphy alludes to the aesthetics of old pre-industrialised times. Flowers and plants, mainly bougainvilleas and climbing vines, which previously were seen in the courtyards of the Archaniote houses, found their place in public spaces as well (Fig. 90). Stone built benches and fountains, old style streetlights and big clay storage jars in the style of Thrapsano (now used as flowerpots) complete the image of a village projecting strong memories of the past.

The creation of a network of new public spaces, squares and pedestrian back streets not only changed the aspect of the village but also some of its social functions. It unified communal spaces, permitting the free movement of people from one area to another. This was of great importance at the centre of the settlement, which accommodates most commercial, religious, administrative and social functions such as the control of people's behaviour and the exchange of information on the latest local, national and international news. The interventions on the main square, which previously had only modern-style concrete buildings, have also had some social implications. In its current traditional-looking version, the square is not only a space for public meetings and the gathering of administrative functions but also for the development of a new type of recreation. After the completion of the programme, an unusual number of tavernas opened around the square, and a coffee-shop was transformed into a "traditional" one as is stated on its sign. In the summer months, the square is completely covered with tables and chairs for the hundreds of visitors, mainly from Heraklion, who come to Archanes for dinner.

The calm back streets without cars, the renovated old houses, the shops full of pleasing colours and the old-style aesthetics imbued the village with a rather

nostalgic atmosphere, different from that encountered in many other Greek (and Cretan) villages.

In spring 2002, before the visit of a primary school group from Heraklion to the museum of Archanes, the teacher suddenly stopped the children in front of the small square around the church of the Holy Cross and asked them to observe it. As she said, she wanted the children to maintain inside them the image of a picturesque church in the middle of a nice small square, *“an image characteristic of the beauty of Cretan villages, which is now encountered rather rarely”*.

Interestingly, the square was created and decorated as part of the overall conservation programme.

### **III. TRADITION OFFERED TO CONSUMPTION:** **PRESENTING THE VILLAGE TO POTENTIAL VISITORS**

So far Archanes has only been included in a few tourist tours, those aiming at showing Crete “off the beaten tracks”. The conservation programme, the archaeological discoveries as well as the various initiatives to protect and promote what now is seen as the Archaniote natural heritage have brought increasing but still not large numbers of visitors to the village. On several occasions, the mayor has stated that his goal has been not to attract massive tourism but to develop forms of eco-tourism, which do not upset the environment. Attempts are also made locally to promote Mt Juktas as an “alternative” destination, presenting natural and historical interest and having a great deal to say about the character of the area. This is how the place is presented to visitors in tourist brochures:

*...The efforts to preserve its historical and archaeological heritage make Archanes stand out.*

*Archanes is a lovely place, unlike other areas where development was unsupervised. The results are obvious: the population of Archanes is continually increasing, due to all those attracted by its small miracle. Significantly, people as well as the buildings and the natural environment are cared for. [...]*

***Archanes attracts both foreigners and local visitors by offering something different: authenticity, cleanliness, respect for the environment and tradition.** Its coolness in the heart of the summer, the promise of good food and wine call you. Romantics can take a walk through the lanes at sunset, where you will still meet groups of people sitting and chatting on their doorsteps.*

*There is the scent of jasmine, carnations and the other flowers decorating the front yards. You can also find traditional cafés where you can exchange a friendly word with the old men sitting there. Strolling around Archanes is worthwhile!*

From the tourist magazine *Welcome to Crete*, (vol 14: n.p. The text is signed by the “Municipality of Archanes”).)

Therefore authenticity and tradition have become, through the mediation of the local authorities, significant characteristics of the place, which can be experienced by visitors during the short stay in the village. In contrast to the tourist campaigns of most Cretan places which promote antiquities and the seaside, in Archanes visitors are encouraged to see “a place with history” which is not confined to its archaeological ruins but embraces Cretan culture as a whole. As a tourist website claims,<sup>20</sup> “this [Archanes] is where you can live the Cretan experience” whereby Cretan is obviously meant authentically and/or traditionally Cretan.

Angela Schilling, a young German tourist visiting the place, finds the Minoan excavated site at Tourkogitonia

*...more interesting... than Knossos, where the crowds and what you see in front of the entrance [the tourist shops] make it look like a circus. In Archanes, the houses of modern people all around, which are also nice, make the archaeological site look more authentic.*

Thus the living spaces of the Archaniote people serve as a traditional décor, a welcome and pleasant frame for the palatial Minoan building.

The village gradually, but still very slowly, is entering the domain of cultural tourism. Until 2002, the village had only one hotel offering accommodation, opened in an *archondiko* “restored with rustic elegance” as mentioned on its advertisement. (Fig. 91). Its purpose is to offer holidays “inspired by the meaning of local tradition”. It promotes the scenic view of Mt Juktas and the rural landscape, the “traditional communal spaces”, etc. which, however, it combines with modern facilities, such as, for example, a swimming pool made in the former courtyard of the old house. Obviously, organic food made from recipes taken from the old Cretan culinary tradition is served in its snack-bar.

---

<sup>20</sup> “The Crete you are looking for” on [www.CreteTravel.com.htm](http://www.CreteTravel.com.htm), acc. 13-12-2006. Archanes, a visit. Quick guide by

The promise of lovely food and wine in a “traditional setting”, in this case in the renovated central square, is the reason the village is now an important and frequent destination for many inhabitants of Heraklion. At a convenient distance from the city, it offers them the “long-lost feeling of a village” as a man from Heraklion visiting the place with his family for a Sunday lunch told me. He chose one of the Archaniote tavernas that advertises its dishes as respecting the rules of Cretan diet and hospitality (Fig. 92, 93). On this basis the taverna has received financial support from the European Union.

These EU “subsidies to tradition” emphasise the special character and quality of Archaniote products and support “alternative” or simply sustainable activities outside the imperatives of mass-tourism. In this way, many local traditions are not only promoted and authenticated but also re-constructed and included in the local population’s attempts at self-representation.

This emerging cultural reality in Archanes is often associated with the local significance of the Minoan culture. The example of a taverna-owner who requested the young local painter Anna Kanaki to paint a Minoan scene in the interior of his taverna is indicative in this respect. As Anna told me, she had suggested that she could paint a more “traditional scene”, i.e., “an old woman putting the bread in the oven” instead of the currently depicted group of Minoan women collecting water in the courtyard of an imaginary ancient palace. But the taverna-owner insisted that the Minoan theme was more appropriate.

Therefore, a new definition of tradition is produced in the village which after its aesthetic imposition on the material surface of houses, public spaces and ancient sites now affects people’s opinions about the content, the style and the “authenticity” of the local heritage. This play with objects generates new cultural practices, such as the promising forms of cultural tourism which not only reshape people’s living and working spaces but also their collective self-representation in relation to the meaning of recent as well as ancient Archaniote history.

### 3. MEMORY, MATERIAL CULTURE AND THE DEBATING OF ARCHANIOTE TRADITION

*Historical consciousness and other forms of social knowledge are created and then replicated in time and space through commensal ethics and exchange...  
In this type of exchange, history, knowledge, feeling and the senses become embedded in the material culture and its components: specific artefacts, places and performances.*

Seremetakis 1996: 99-100.

The need for “some tradition” and the notion of authenticity associated with it are a global quest. Either as a significant reason for travelling or as a way of reassuring social identities and local distinctiveness, this phenomenon has been investigated by several scholars (see Cowan 1988, Argyrou 1996, Macdonald 1997a, Sutton 1998, cf. Hall 2000). Already in previous chapters of the thesis the quest for cultural authenticity was examined as part of the tourist visit to Knossos, as well as in the making of the various cultural topographies of Crete, revealing its relation to the overall perception of the island as a place with “living customs”.

For Archaniote society, the restored houses and publicised antiquities also constitute the evidence of such long-lasting local traditions; they are the two sides of a remarkable local past. They represent two fundamental periods in the Archaniote history synonymous to social progress, admirable works, development, wealth, and good taste whereas both are related to the surrounding landscape, the mountain and the practice of agriculture, which continues until today.

Nevertheless, it has not always been so. Until the early 1990s, the local material culture dated in these two periods, i.e., in the early twentieth century and the Minoan era, by no means had any meanings here different from those generally encountered in the rest of Crete. There were some Minoan antiquities in and around the



settlement, important, of course, as everywhere in Crete, but their impact was rather limited and no comparison could be made to the famous symbols of Cretanness such as Knossos. And the big and impressive *archondika* were built in a period of great local economic and cultural development but this style had in the meantime become old-fashioned, surely not adequate for all the inhabitants and, besides this, they could not compete with the standards of “modernity” sought in home spaces everywhere in Crete, as described for example in the village of modern Knossos. Hence many locals, despite the legal clauses protecting the historical character of the settlement, slightly “modernised” their houses as a result of the need for maintenance. Finally, the now aestheticised rural landscape of the village with its strong Minoan connotations was basically the source of the villagers’ wealth associated with memories of some heroic events, but mainly with good or bad harvests, commercial transactions and family inheritances until some years ago.

Yet the official management of historical knowledge profoundly changed these local evaluations of the past ascribing to the above mentioned two periods of the Archanote history much of the role they have to date and causing an extensive re-working of the past among the local population. This, in turn, impacted on the local sense of community and the re-shaping of social memory and local identity in relation to people and institutions located outside the village.

In the following pages, I shall try to understand how the material heritage of these two historical periods is perceived to date by the local population and also to explore the processes by which it has acquired their current significance. The combined exploration of both periods as enmeshed in Archanote traditions leads us to the paths of a “lived history” with important material implications and allows us to trace the multiple refractions of archaeological knowledge in current local practices.

**I. DEALING WITH THE RECENT PAST**  
**(MID-NINETEENTH – MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY)**

**- Archaniote houses and stone working: “Hard” memories**

*MY FATHER'S HOUSE*

*My father's house was traditional, built with stone*

*On the floors and the walls.*

*When opening the entrance door and going a little bit to the inside*

*You would feel it was a dream for you. [...]*

*A stone worker was my father*

*And the stone prevailed everywhere.*

*In such a mansion in the year 23*

*My mother, loving and adoring, gave birth to me.*

*I've written these simple verses so that you know*

*My father's home that no longer exists.*

*Because like many others it was torn apart*

*And cogwheels like dinosaurs came and pulled it down.*

A poem written by the Archaniote stone-worker Lefteris Oustamanolakis about his family house, now demolished (cited in Doundoulaki 1996 [1984]: 100, my translation)

*Streets at Archanes have always been stone-paved: our place has been civilised  
and productive from the very beginning.*

Lela Papadaki, farmer.

Stone-built houses at Archanes live in peoples' memories as thoroughly biographical objects, as often happens with residences of all types where people have spent their childhood. Each house has a different story to tell about its owners, its residents and its neighbours. As mentioned in the previous section of this chapter, the construction,

decoration, maintenance, extension or demolishing of a house was – and still is – closely associated with marriages, inheritances, births and deaths, as well as with gendered social values such as the demonstration of technical competence, family prestige, good taste and respectable housewifery.

However, the presence of stone in local architecture made Archaniote houses the topic of a broader biography, that of the whole village. In it, several other people took part: builders, quarrymen, carvers and carpenters. All of them were Archaniotes working in family businesses having strong ties with their employers, i.e., the house owners. Thus stone became the mark of “civilised” Archanes, as the farmer Lela Papadaki asserts in the words quoted above, as long as the villagers had the economic, aesthetic and technical skills to use an expensive and demanding material, also very resistant to the social and physical changes brought by time.

The period after 1950 signified the abandonment of some *archondika* and the use of more modern and cheaper materials in repairing and extending the old houses or in building new ones. The extraction of stone and working on it, which constituted two important local professions, had stopped completely by the mid 1950s. Nevertheless, that same period also signified the long-desired start of a new age of economic regeneration, and for many Archaniotes, the possibility to have their own house at a lower cost. This was particularly important in a period that competing urban models of modernity were established as valuable, progressive and desired all over Greece. The houses and the other stone-built constructions such as mills, cobbled roads, bridges and fountains, stables, open-air furniture, etc., which had no practical use any more, were associated with a long-gone phase of the village, identified with the childhood of Archaniote people or the lives of their parents and grandparents. Kept in people’s hearts, they became memories of an important, nostalgic but hard and definitely historic time.

Before 1990, calls for protection of the houses were heard only sporadically, mainly by local intellectuals and teachers. The latter, who, as elsewhere in the Greek periphery, deal with folkloric writing and the recording of objects, oral works, customs and memories of their homelands, articulated their own alternative, heavily romantic discourse regarding the preservation of local architectural heritage. Among

them, the Archaniote teacher Eleni Doundoulaki, in her essay *Stone Memories and Monuments*, first published in 1984, expressed her sadness for the then abandoned houses of her village as follows:

Strolling through the roads of this place, our own beloved place, every middle-aged person watches the structures that are so familiar to him and his mind turns to other, older ones. But in vain does he look for them; for those demolished by new people, those changed or hidden between the geometrically erected cement dragons of today.  
[...]

But even more, it is the unprotected houses and the deserted ones left to rot at the merciless damage of time the ones that he holds on to. "If landlords do not pass by, things become derelict..." one keeps mumbling while strolling around and meditating melancholically.  
[...]

Delicately carved, as if the craftsman's heart beats through his hand, the upright or inclined doorframes placed one upon the other or side by side with admirable precision bring thousands of memories to your mind and, unwilling as you may be, many figures come back to life in flesh and blood.  
Dear God, real God, an endless interminable chain, all the past and gone.  
[...]

Never getting old, with utter perseverance and indestructible nobility, with modest pride, their stone bodies are displayed. Even with the slightest intuition one may surely comprehend that those hundred-year-old doorframes bless the workmen that have carved them, so that they can endure the overflowing decades of time.  
[...]

[Hundred and two-hundred-year-old] buildings narrate their lives with the joys and torments of the people that lived in them... And how much they have seen and heard of, be it secret or evident, because most of the time people forget that "the walls have ears". And in this place there are walls dated from all times... (1996 [1984]: 17-18, my translation)

In her narration, Doundoulaki recognised the destiny of her village in the adventures of local stonework. The strongly emotive and literary style of the essay is additionally stressed by the use of Cretan dialect. The teacher wanted to be heard not only by the members of the Folklore Study Group of the Academy of Athens (where

she sent her essay) but also by her fellow-villagers who were neglecting a (then) vanishing architectural legacy.

As in the quoted poem written by the old Archaniote stone-worker, the cement that replaced the old stones and the machines that demolished the old houses are monstrous creatures, *dragons* or *dinosaurs* that devour genuine and sincere human relations. The stone-built houses stand for the happiness and adversity of a way of life that some people do not wish to forget.

Stone offers a metaphor for the materiality of an important past, both personal and collective (cf. Tilley 2004). Moreover, the body metaphor is also used for the description of the special significance of the old Archaniote houses. Human body metaphors related to architecture often serve as models for comparisons in structural, decorative and symbolic terms (Tilley 1999: 45). Such a “trope” is so powerful that in Doundoulaki’s words all stone constructions become bodies proud of their creators. Like human beings they are also *wise* because of the countless stories they “heard” during the times they housed people’s lives and deaths. For years, these stories remained hidden underneath the plaster that covered the old stones.

#### **-The acceptance of the restoration programme by the Archaniote population:**

##### **Practical aspects**

*Today Archaniotes tend to include all old stones in their houses and even the new buildings follow the old style: stone-built walls, yards, enclosures; the least people do is to use stone as coating material ... We personally refurbished our two small houses (“metohakia”) in the countryside: they are now without plaster so that the old stones (“pelekia”) can be seen.*

Lela Papadaki, farmer

The transition from the phase of neglect to that of the preservation of the stone-built houses was not immediate. The restoration programme as decided and proposed by the local authorities did not find unconditional acceptance by Archaniotes from the

outset. At the initial stage, locals expressed conflicting opinions which contested the importance of tradition in their village as envisaged by its local authorities, given that it had to do with a very personal and significant part of their lives, i.e., their homes.

The initial distrust towards the programme echoed the usual suspicion towards the state bureaucracy (see above, chapters 4 and 5) but, this time, the European Union's unclear aims as well: was there something hidden behind such "good" intentions? The fear that property rights would be deemed of secondary importance in the face of the country's cultural heritage came, once again, to the fore. The fact that "alien" EU decision centres were willing to pay the citizens of a Cretan village to restore their houses without any form of compensation seemed awkward and suspicious. Perhaps the financing of restorations on private houses by the EU meant that the organisation would claim co-ownership of the Archaniote houses. And what if this meant a potential confiscation of entire properties? The then mayor of Archanes and the civil engineers working for the local council's technical department now recall that they had to deal patiently with the locals' fears (personal communication) by holding long discussions and persuading Archaniotes to participate in the project.

Unlike heritage conservation initiatives undertaken elsewhere such as those in Rethymno and in Anafiotika in Athens mentioned in the previous chapter, the Archaniote project was dependant on local consent. It had the meaning of an overall local council initiative based on the possibility offered by the EU to restore the old houses, and not of a state-run aesthetic control of new material forms, which had been in effect in the village anyway since the 1950s. The owners of the houses could participate only after application. Without their consent, the project, which aimed to support local cultural expressions, decrease unemployment and revive old professional activities would have lost its meaning as early as the first year of its application in 1992.

One of the then emphasised positive aspects of the project was that the restorations were assumed by the technical department of the municipality. In practice, this meant quicker bureaucratic procedures managed by familiar persons, some of whom were locally elected officers, and not by the unknown and distant employees of a

state agency. Moreover, it also meant an additional income for many local technicians, decorators, carpenters, etc. employed by the local council in the restoration works. In a time of severe economic difficulties because of the devastation of local vines by the vine louse, several Archaniotes earned some extra money working for the project.

Yet the most convincing argument in ensuring local participation was the very cost of a house restoration. According to the regulations, the house-owners had to pay only 30% of the restoration cost while the remaining 70% was covered by European funds. This made the decision to accept the proposed intervention on old houses very attractive and the first Archaniotes applied to the council asking their property be included in the project. In the following years, most objections grew weaker and the number of applications tripled.

Moreover, as it has been mentioned, the nucleus of the settlement where most *archondika* are located was declared – well before the 1990s – a protected area because of its historical and archaeological importance. Given these restrictions, tearing down an old house was not an easy business, while in the area of the antiquities it was absolutely impossible to make any kind of alterations, let alone new constructions. As a result, the project appeared as a convenient opportunity to renovate buildings, which “*had to be preserved*” and could neither be demolished nor altered significantly (e.g., expanded). As an old Archaniote told me:

*As long as you couldn't pull down a house, and you didn't want it to collapse, the only solution was to restore it. (Afou den borouses na to halasis, i moni lisi gia na min pesi itan na to anaplasis). Well, since there was the programme, we took advantage of it! (ke mia pou irthe to programa, na to ekmataleftoume!) If we could pull it down, make a third floor, etc. then of course there would have been reactions against it. But we couldn't, so we accepted it.*

The project was equally opportune for those owners that lived outside the village and had left the houses to decay; restoration without the council's assistance would have been particularly expensive or not affordable at all.

The abrogation of the dowry by law in 1984 and the flexibility of local rules concerning the inheritance of the paternal house by children of either sex also played a role in the acceptance of the programme. Upon marriage young couples are normally given plots of land or cash by either parental family in order to build their house. This fact (together with the lack of preference for virilocal or uxrilocal households) partially explains the lack of significant objections against the restorations.<sup>21</sup> For those parents who continued to live in an old house while their children had moved elsewhere, this was an opportunity to restore it at a relatively low cost and to bequeath it to one of their sons or daughters, in good condition. Similarly, for the houses already given to children living elsewhere, the programme allowed the repairs as well as the re-establishment of a new relationship with the place of origin, which by the late 1990s had become very popular. Finally, even the parents with unmarried children who, judging from other cases such as Rethymnon, would be expected to raise serious objection to such an initiative, agreed to participate in it: the gradual abandonment of farming and the easiness of moving by car to the nearby area now offers parents the possibility of constructing new houses for their children outside the historical nucleus, before or soon after the children's marriage. One of their plots of land can be given for this purpose, provided that the new construction follows some very basic rules regarding its aesthetics. This possibility allowed older people to live in old but decent houses, whereas a young or newly married Archaniote couple can build a new one somewhere in the surrounding area, with all the modern comforts they need in close proximity to the village and their parents.

Thus, the restoration programme, which lasted nearly ten years, involved almost all inhabitants one way or another and the official management of social memory through interventions on personal house properties has been, as we shall see, soundly established.

---

<sup>21</sup> For a presentation of local inheritance practices, see the Appendix.



**-An “institutionalised” tradition: a new life for old houses and “authentically traditional” new spaces**

The examination of the different phases of the restoration initiative gives us some clues about the official meanings ascribed to the notion of tradition as resulting from the “authentication” process of Archaniote architecture.

The decision to preserve all pre-war architectural elements and remove those made after WWII implies that the period between 1950 and 1990, despite the fact that it put an end to the economic stagnation and poverty brought with the war, is not included (or considered worthwhile being included) in what is called Archaniote tradition, therefore maintained and protected. Quite the opposite, it has to be either omitted or, when this is not possible, covered and replaced with newly made but traditional-looking structures, what D. Brown calls “genuine fakes” (1996). Even communal spaces that never existed in the past but comply with the image people have about this past are now deemed as “authentically” traditional – a process encountered in many other Greek places where people debate and represent a common heritage (see Kenna 2003).

This process of “authentication” of Archaniote culture involves the operation and co-operation of different types of authority. People *with* authority, people *in* authority, or people *speaking about* the authority of tradition (Fees 1996: 123) negotiate, contest or decide “its future”. Thus the people in authority, i.e., the mayor and the council, were engaged in a successful effort to ensure funds as well as to demand and apply scientific studies for the preservation of local heritage. Local intellectuals also exercised their *well-regarded* authority in the same direction, as followed from their occupation with folklore, i.e., the domain of tradition par excellence consolidating or reifying its forms and meaning (cf. Cowan 1988). Other scholars working locally, e.g., archaeologists, being people with authority (though not always uncontested), play a special and generally acknowledged role in the philosophy of the pursued project. They often demonstrate their sensitivity in maintaining not only the Minoan heritage of the village but also that of other historical periods, including the landscape. During a recent lecture (2001), Yannis Sakellarakis encouraged his audience, consisting of Archaniotes, to remain dedicated to agriculture “as local

people have always done here since Minoan times” and to prevent Archanes from becoming “a suburb of Heraklion”.<sup>22</sup> This apparently odd encouragement of farmers to practice their “age long tradition” (inextricably linked to the “threatening” expansion of Heraklion towards Archanes) bears the imprint of the scholarly authority in all things related not only to the management of the ancient past but also of the present and the future of the village. The profound knowledge of the place’s history, during which agriculture has brought prosperity, cultural progress and wealth to the Archaniotes, is an image that authorities and scholars alike want to project, although in reality these practices are gradually becoming more a symbolic reference to local identity with gradually less practical grounds rather than a promising occupation in the future.

The institutionalisation of tradition occurring through the restoration project also involves decision making about the use of some restored houses, decisions that add new life-phases to the “biography” of the old Archaniote private residences. Some of them now house recently-founded public institutions, the folklore museum (opened in 2002), the meeting place for the Archaniote youth, etc., whereas the renovated *archondiko* of the Lidakis family is used for temporary exhibitions by the municipality (Fig. 86). The most prestigious public buildings of Archanes, i.e., the former town hall, the old primary school and the old main school buildings, also house new functions (the archaeological museum, the open university and the centre for environmental education) connecting in the most prestigious way the notion of Archaniote tradition to the presence of these institutions, which until recently were totally foreign to the life of the village.

---

<sup>22</sup> The lecture was given within a conference on the history of Archanes in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (12-13 May 2001) held at the local Primary School.

**- From relative oblivion to the re-enactment of history: The social impact of the restoration programme**

*In being remembered, an experience becomes a different kind of experience.*

Casey 1987: xii

Restored Archaniote houses have come to signify much more for people than in the past. They are not simply private properties but something that culturally belongs to many other people apart from their owners and residents. In relation to this extended “ownership”, several politicians, specialists and visitors now express their own views about the form and future of these houses, which have become the focus of a new exchange of feelings, ideas and knowledge of the past.

The restored houses are now placed in a new network of social relations and experiences. Through what Seremetakis calls “commensal ethics” (1996: 99-100), the exchange of different forms of social knowledge, historical consciousness of the Archaniote past is replicated and new symbolic meanings are found in the now re-appreciated local architecture.

The new collectivities that are created in the village “re-write” through actual experience and emotional involvement the historical knowledge in and about Archanes, whereas people’s personal ways of remembering the village’s past have now changed as they are refracted through the official importance given to their properties.

The demographic composition of the Archanes population has started to change as well. Émigré Archaniotes or members of migrant communities return to the village in increasing numbers. Although some locals complain that their place is now full of unknown newcomers, most villagers talk about a new start in the life of the place, which has always been very open and hospitable towards the *xenoi*, i.e., the “foreigners” or rather, the “outsiders, those coming from elsewhere”.

Actually, a small but increasing number of “xenoi” have decided either to buy or restore old stone-built houses or to settle in the still very few properties of the village offered for rent. They prefer to commute to Heraklion instead of living in the city, as, for example, Lina and Pandelis, two young biologists from Thessaloniki who settled in Archanes without having any family ties to the village. They wanted “*a human place to bring up the children*” and Archanes seemed to be “*a good choice far away from the hectic way of life in a city*”. Their house is one of the best-maintained buildings with a view of Mt Juktas and its stone frames, the “pelekia”, have been totally uncovered under the previous plaster. In the garden, Lina cultivates her own vegetables, which she uses in everyday cooking.

The restored houses, some of them which very emphatically stressed their traditional features even in their interior decoration and furniture, have become important for Archaniotes living in Heraklion as well. Many of them prefer not to rent out the restored houses so that they can visit them as frequently as possible, often with friends, and spend here some time in the summer or at the weekends. The old houses have become revived links to these people’s childhood and place of origin.

After the long period of “disregard” shown towards traditional aesthetic forms, these have reappeared as respected and important expressions of a local or even national culture. Twelve years after the first implementation of the programme, many people have restored their houses in the old style without any subsidy or financial aid from the municipality, the state or the EU. Even many of the new constructions follow a “stone-aesthetic” which imitates – with or without success – the old style (see Fig.87). The same re-appreciation applies for the almost forgotten professions of the stonecutter and the stone builder and has been accompanied by an increasing demand for hand-made objects. Furniture and domestic spaces that do not serve current needs, for example the wine-presses, are maintained in the interior of houses as material memories of personal and collective history (Fig. 88). Even when they are transformed into extra bedrooms, attractive living-rooms, etc., they keep the once displaced stone objects (furniture, water basins, vessels, hand mills used for the grinding of wheat at home, etc., see Fig. 89) re-incorporated into new forms.

Therefore, the revival of “traditional Archanes” transforms the old houses into regenerated bearers of social memory. The institutionalisation of tradition occurring through the preservation and valorisation of its material culture somehow “memorialises” the past of the village. In a way it attempts to remind everyone, and primarily the Archaniotes, of their own important past. By preserving houses until recently considered old-fashioned and creating “traditional” communal space that had never existed, the management of local memory has acquired a peculiar commemorative aspect since it selectively defines what from this common material past has to be remembered and what not. As Casey observes, commemoration is something “thoroughly communal” (1987: 217). Although the preserved culture consisted of private houses, these dwellings have become part of a collective history and represent the whole village.

Moreover, the re-emergence of stone also commemorates, materially, the Archaniote past. As often happens with old objects that at some point were discarded from everyday use (e.g., antique furniture, see Mavrayianni 1999), their re-appearance “under a layer of dust accumulated with time” (ibid.: 175) and their re-use in current contexts is imbued with strong and sometimes new meanings. It is these new meanings of the recent past which, as we shall see, nourish and are nourished by the current “writing” of the Minoan history of Archanes.

### **-The rural landscape: from farming land to spectacle**

*What we experience in the ‘discovery’ of ‘authentic’ objects is the discovery of our own authenticity.*

Fees 1996: 141

The landscape around Archanes and Mt Juktas is another part of local material culture whose meaning has begun to change after the conservation programme. The farming lands slowly emerge in the everyday life of people who are not farmers or owners of cultivated fields (Fig. 96).

The aesthetic enjoyment of the area as a pleasing geometry of human labour is not totally new to the area. Already in 1969, the Greek novelist Stratis Mirivilis wrote his impressions from the village's countryside during his visit to Archanes (cited in Christinidis and Bounakis 1997: 12, my translation):

*...This is a green colour, fresh and clean, with no spots and gaps. [The visitor] hides' within the foliage; and the leaves whisper in his ear the promise of Cretan wine, ardent and irritating just like the Cretan soul. And they whisper at Archanes the delicious and aesthetic charms of Cretan grapes...*

In Myrivilis's now oft-cited words, the Archaniote landscape means much more than methods of agricultural economy and people's hard work. It evokes aesthetic values, even social virtues (cf. Williams 1973, Lowenthal 1998, Bender 1998: 25-38). Moreover, as long as its view is linked to the enjoyment of other senses, especially sight and taste, today it offers an appropriate setting for the experiencing of tradition. not only by visitors but by some Archaniotes as well.

The retired teacher, Rena Fanouraki, recently bought a house in the country, just next to the archaeological site of Vathypetro. In the tiny nearby settlement consisting of fewer than 20 houses, she and her husband enjoy silence, peacefulness, and the beauty of an "ancient landscape", i.e., the hillsides and the endless cultivated fields. As they say, the view from the house "*of four provinces of the county is quintessentially Cretan and Archaniote in particular*".

The hamlet of Vathypetro was once a very poor part of the Archanes area. Its two families abandoned it and moved to the main village. With Rena Fanourakis's and a few other people's decision to buy and restore the handful of houses, the hamlet now returns to life. In 2002, a local cultural association was founded and during the festival of the saint to whom the local church is dedicated, many Archaniotes went to Vathypetron to celebrate, to wish a good start of life to the new residents and to attend the speeches of the local folklorists, under the light provided by a small electrical generator since the settlement was abandoned before the introduction of electricity.

Being aware of the meaning and value of old Cretan handicrafts, the couple decorated their new house in the Cretan style: “*We have made all decoration look Cretan*” (“*kaname oli ti diakosmisi kritikia*”), they point out. They only used stone and wood and brought several old objects inherited from their parents, some of which Mrs Fanouraki was planning to donate to the folklore museum but at the last moment decided to keep for the new country house.

The presence of antiquities functions as a fundamental starting point in the history of the area. The Archaniote couple see them standing at the beginning of a long evolution, in which the standard point of reference is the patchwork formed by the vineyards and the olive groves. The heart of the place beats in its landscape, the source of wealth since ancient times, and it is offered as a pleasure to those who can appreciate its ceaseless cultural value.

## **II. VALUING THE MINOAN PAST: ITS INCORPORATION IN LOCAL TRADITIONS**

### **-Constructing the meaning of continuity**

Although Evans worked for very short periods in Archanes and his finds were rather limited and sporadic, he clearly left his mark on the village and its people. His interpretation of the Archaniote remains as the summer residence of King Minos, which echoed, as in Knossos, his Victorian mentality according to which royal families used to spend the summer in a different palace, has never been totally forgotten.

The fame that Archanes acquired after the impressive archaeological discoveries by the Sakellarakis couple again brought this old view to the fore. Evans's theory was used to explain the presence of a "palatial building" in Archanes, the one in Tourkogitionia, which is impressive because of its masonry. The same theory could also explain the wealth of the funeral gifts found in the Minoan graveyard at Fourni. Building on this concept of a summer royal residence and the luxuriousness of the unearthed objects, the assumption that Minoan Archanes was of equal importance to Knossos was a logical consequence. The proximity of Archanes to Knossos and its beautiful natural surroundings also made it ideal for such a "royal summer choice". Two Archaniote ladies, Mrs Sintihaki, an illiterate lady in her sixties living in Tourkogitionia, and Mrs Papadaki, an Archaniote farmer of the same age (quoted above in relation to the meaning of Archaniote stone), discuss the meaning of the excavated building:

Mrs Sintihaki: *This is part of the summer palace of Minos, that is to say that Archanes was connected to Knossos. The winter palace was in Knossos and the summer palace was in Archanes.*

Mrs Papadaki: *That's a great thing. We don't know if in the future it will be proved that this palace was even superior to the one at Knossos. For me [as an Archaniote] this is the best and I say so!*



Archaniotes habitually claim the royal status for the “local palace”. In this context we should also place the frequent reference to Archanes as the “Versailles of Knossos” (see this chapter’s opening quote), this time recalling the French example of a summer royal residence instead of a British one.

Archanes is no different from the rest of Crete, or even many other places in Greece, in constructing the meaning of cultural continuity through links to a celebrated ancient heritage. The archaeological discoveries that connect the ancient past with the present consolidate the antiquity of the place and include it in the proud face of the country and the island in particular. As such it is promoted and can even be used to erase the signs of a past –considered of secondary importance or even negative in terms of local progress – from the local collective representation. Mrs Fanouraki expresses a personal opinion concerning the change of the name of Tourkogitonia, which owes its name to the Turkish population living here until the end of the nineteenth century:

*In my opinion this quarter should have been named “Minoan quarter”. Why “Turkish quarter”? Why? The Turks came here later on, and they left, say, one or two centuries ago. This is where the Turks used to live, this is how it got its name, but I have suggested that it should be named “Minoan quarter”. There are so many archaeological finds there, why do we have to name it after the Turks, isn’t it so? Anyway, this is only a personal view.*

This is a personal view, of course, which consciously proposes what is worth being remembered from the past of this particular area. The Minoans were definitely those who left remarkable signs of an advanced culture and not the Turks, i.e., the representatives of a backwards and oppressive regime. And, in any case, many of those Turkish signs were erased after the Cretan Revolution (see Tzombanaki 2002). Mrs Fanouraki, who, as a former teacher and amateur folklorist, has long called for the preservation of local heritage, “purifies” the meaning of what she calls “long Archaniote tradition” from negative or undesired elements and explains why the recent Archaniote traditions have their roots in the Minoan times:

*The Minoan society was very well-developed. We know that. Their entertainment, their spectacles and their way of life were of high quality. There were no walls around the cities because there were no wars going on. Their ships travelled to the most remote seas of that time and I do believe that **this society was in fact a kind of paradise...***

*I believe that there is a tradition coming back from the Minoan era, and in many aspects the way of life has not changed throughout the millennia that have gone by. I don't know if you have been to Vathypetro with the Minoan winery and the olive press. Well, this means that their products and the production and the collection of fruits, even the houses, etc., have always been done in the same way. There are differences now of course because of the progress and the machinery used, etc. but in general, I think that there is a lot in common between the old way of life and today. (Emphasis added)*

The archaeological construct of the peaceful and developed Minoans finds its Archaniote version in things that “have been done always in the same way”. Thus the lady herself makes fine embroideries mixing Cretan folk and Minoan motifs, reminiscent of similar handicrafts described earlier, such as, for example, the collections of the *Lyceum of Greek Women* of Heraklion. She also paints themes derived from the ancient Cretan mythology and Minoan archaeology in the style of folk naïve painters. In 2002 the lady presented these paintings in an exhibition at a nearby village. Hundreds of children saw these works, which were not for sale. This was an “offering” to the younger generation to see what happened on their island a long time ago and to understand that the Minoan past is part of a single Cretan tradition because: “*As Cretans, we have the duty to transmit all knowledge available...*”

Even the character of the Archaniotes, their proverbial diligence and penchant for hard work, as well as their creativity may be seen, though very rarely, as a logical consequence of their Minoan ancestry. In this discourse, a much-discussed and extremely controversial study conducted in the 1960s by the Greek physical

anthropologist Aris Poulianos (1971) deserves some special attention. For years the anthropologist was concerned with the origins and biological ancestry of modern Cretans. He made extensive comparisons between skulls found in archaeological excavations, among which some derived from Archanes, and the skulls of modern Cretans. Using these craniometrical observations and combining them with a series of folkloric, linguistic and other material, he concluded that modern Cretans are descendants of the Minoans (Fig. 94-95).<sup>23</sup>

These views, which he also published in the popular magazine “Kriti” in the 1970s, have definitely influenced some of the Archaniote intellectuals, who reproduce these theories, as far as the specifically Archaniote link to the Minoan “ancestors” is concerned. Mrs Fanouraki, who is aware of the study, agrees with Poulianos’s views and evokes them as “scientific proof” of the special Minoan-rooted character of Archaniote culture. She comments:

*Fanouraki: ...The race is being perpetuated as well as their [the Minoans’] interests and I believe that Minoans and Cretans of today share more or less the same temperament...*

*Esther: What do you mean by “temperament”?*

*Fanouraki: The way they feel, their emotions, their joys and sorrows, their habits, all that. They existed in old times; they exist today as well. At least, this is what we believe.*

Yet this is a “transplantation”, as the lady calls it, into contemporary Archaniotes not only of the Minoan racial characteristics but also of something more important, of their inner world, their “psyche”, as she says with an emotion that reveals her attachment to the place.

---

<sup>23</sup> The controversy about Poulianos’s research concerning the biological origins of modern Greeks has never stopped since the early 1970s. Members of the archaeological community have often contested his methods and theories as racist or lacking credibility (see [www.eaa.gr](http://www.eaa.gr), where the scholar defends his views regularly, against the “obscure centres” that oppose him).

Therefore the hypothesis about the Minoan descent not only offers an apparently scientific basis for assumptions about the origins of modern Archaniotes but also of a psychological frame of mind. The metaphors of kinship, so diffused in the Greek nationalist construct, here find their verification as long as the ancient human bones appear to belong to the Archaniote ancestors. The folklorist perception of survivals as envisaged by the first Greek *laografoi* (folklorists) of the early twentieth century (see Herzfeld 1982, 2003) here finds a “physical” expression which, in turn, allows a deeply emotive call to preserve the ancestral heritage as a moral duty in much the same way Archaniotes maintain their family properties, inherited lands and, now, the houses.

### III. DEALING WITH THE SCHOLARLY AUTHORITY

*I have so little to say about Sakellarakis,  
The one who first started this project:*

*If you throw a stone anywhere  
“Don’t!” you hear from everybody,  
“You’ll ruin King Minos’s city!”*

Improvised mantinada by an Archaniote resident  
(my translation)

When talking with Archaniotes, the name of the archaeologist Yannis Sakellarakis arises in every discussion concerning the new image of the village. The first comments usually refer to his willingness to make the village famous through his discoveries and also to exercise his power in order to maintain the architectural heritage of the village. “*He pushed in Europe for the renovations*”, affirmed an old Archaniote lady, concluding, “*He is the one that made Archanes what it is now*”. Even when the archaeologist mentioned two Archaniotes as involved in illicit trade of Archaniote antiquities<sup>24</sup>, the fact was accepted as a fair interference in order to defend Minoan antiquities as public heritage.<sup>25</sup>

There are several stories about Minoan objects found accidentally in the fields while digging which have been “returned” to the archaeologists. A lady told me about some “*nice small clay dishes, like the church’s incensories*” she found during the repair of her house (“*piatelakia pilina, etsi strogila, san thimiata, me ton pato, orea...*”) Although she wanted to keep one as memento, her father refused: “*It is forbidden, he said, and he gave them to the archaeologist*”.

---

<sup>24</sup> This was during one of his lectures I attended at Archanes (May 2001).

<sup>25</sup> However, the accusations of illicit trade of Minoan objects, which have stigmatised a handful of people, cannot break social relations and solidarity. As an Archaniote told me: “I cannot stop remembering him [i.e., one of the suspected dealers who died some time ago] as a good friend and a very nice person”.

The action of the scholar, however, is not always accepted without objections, especially since he has been very much involved in the conservation of the village's architecture. Vaggelis Horafakis, an Archaniote house painter who has received only basic education at school, remembers the time of the first house restorations as difficult. Many people refused to see "what was good for the place":

*It is always the educated people, the intellectuals, who will struggle against power and thus bring matters to the right point. And I am not talking about the mayor, the authorities, but the base. Suppose Sakellarakis was not there to talk and grumble and quarrel and say 'don't use cement to build', do you have any idea what would have been left of Archanes by now? Nothing. It would have been turned exactly into a new Timbaki or Moires, these awful copies of Heraklion. Have you any idea what we went through when the decision was made about the houses? People were arguing in the kafenia. Ask anybody; they will inform you. But it was only a minority that reacted against it and they were finally convinced. Sakellarakis was saying to them: 'this is a holy mountain [Mt Juktas]; it is not proper to put antennas on it'. But there were people who claimed that they should be allowed to watch more TV channels; can you see what I mean? I think that there should be more sensitivity about these issues. People don't realise that if we don't take up any action we'll all end up being identical due to globalisation.*

Therefore Vaggelis agrees with the archaeologists and the local authorities' initiative as long as their attempts protect the historical character of Archanes. For him, the modernity of Heraklion, now replicated in many small towns in the region, is not in accordance with the meaning of his place; quite the opposite – it should be avoided as an example of the negative effects of cultural homogeneity brought with globalisation. Once again, the preservation of material heritage is an ethical issue which is seen as the tangible safeguarding of local identity. And, unlike other places where identity is affirmed mainly through the preservation of antiquities, here the affirmation of identity also entails the preservation of inhabited spaces, of the

landscape and even of a “non-modernised” aspect of Mt Juktas, a place stamped with the diachronic sacredness Archaniote religious practices.

Yet how are the problems that usually arise in archaeological areas dealt with? The Archaniote ladies, Papadaki and Sintihaki, express their different attitudes to the role of archaeologists with regard to the protection of antiquities located among the village’s houses, i.e., in the neighbourhood of Tourkogitonia. The conversation is revealing since the second lady lives in front of the excavation’s entrance:

*-P: In my opinion, Mr. Sakellarakis started a good policy; he made friends among the Archaniotes, and he was made honorary citizen of Archanes. He hired Archaniote workers to work with him every summer; he hired guards to guard the sites here and there. So lots of people found summer jobs. Tourists keep coming. They saw that our village was getting more civilised and lots of people have heard about it.*

*-S: Yes, but some people who live in my neighbourhood don’t like him...*

*-Esther: Why?*

*-P: They have opposite interests!*

*-S: No, it is because they cannot get the most for their properties, and I cannot either. When their houses are crumbling or damaged, they are not allowed to fix them... Well, the (conservation) programme was good for some people and very bad for others ...*

*-P: Sakellarakis only brought us benefits; we were not harmed!*

*-S: Those who still live near the antiquities can do nothing!*

*-P: But what else do they want to do! [Angry]*

-Esther: *What is the problem with people there exactly?*

-S: *They are pissed off with Sakellarakis; they think he wants to go to court to take their houses in order to dig underneath them and find the antiquities...*

-P: *But I don't understand! Everything is over now. Since they don't want to give up their houses, he won't take them, court or no court...*

This discussion and other similar ones move between what is good for the place and what is good for the individual, when the two do not coincide as they (ideally) should, especially when it regards the few houses adjacent to the excavation. They also reveal the permanent suspicion, frequently mentioned in other chapters, characterising people's relations with the state bureaucracy in general and the "Archaeology" in particular, since one can never be sure whether his property will remain entirely "his". Yet despite the recognition that some people's rights are more restricted than others', most local voices acknowledge the authority of the archaeologists as beneficial for the place. This in turn, allows the representation of the Archaniote attitude to cultural heritage as very different from that encountered in other places, for example in Knossos. Archaniotes give several explanations for this difference: antiquities at Archanes affect very few people while at Knossos almost everyone is affected. The Archaniote palatial building is located amongst inhabited houses and not in a vast unbuilt environment which is prevented from economic development as is the case in Knossos. Furthermore, Archaniotes have "a long history which started in the Minoan times and continues to these days": its signs can be seen everywhere in the village. And their economic practices and their culture have remained "traditional" and "civilised" until nowadays: this is also acknowledged "by Europe" (*"afto to anagnorisi i Evropi"*). Above all, Archaniotes present themselves as able to appreciate the importance of *their* heritage and diverse material manifestations of local tradition.



#### **IV. BRINGING THE COLLECTIVE PAST INTO THE REALM OF PERSONAL AND FAMILY MEMORIES**

In a small community like Archanes, it is common for most people to know each other or to have at least a vague idea of the major local families that have played some role in communal life. Narrations of significant historical events such as the struggles against the Turks and the Nazis are always endowed with personal and family memories.

My discussions with many of them revealed that people's stories about the archaeological heritage of Archanes are *also* mingled with similar reminiscences. These recollections include the actions of respectful citizens, the work done by the local cultural institutions, the operation of the local school and its cultural activity in the past, the donations to the local council, the arrival of significant politicians at Archanes. All the above are marked by kinship relations, happy or unhappy marriages, significant or poor dowries, family prestige and other personal values, judgements and statements. A complex net of social relations involving different actors is formed in which the personal and the collective are inextricably linked.

##### **-Remembering the presence of Sir Arthur Evans**

Mrs Gemenaki, a lady in her eighties, remembers Archanes well before World War II. For her, the past of her village is linked to the reputation of her father's restaurant *Miriofito*, which for nearly a century was the only restaurant in the area. *Miriofito* hosted several formal meals in honour of significant personalities visiting Archanes before the war such as Prime Minister Venizelos, King George of Greece, etc. Among its famous clients eating then "*old foods*" [old-fashioned dishes], Mrs Gemenaki also remembers Sir Arthur Evans, another frequent client at her father's restaurant on his short trips to the village:

*Evans was a very frequent visitor in Archanes. In those times there were neither restaurants nor tavernas in the area. "Miriofito" was the only one and it was renowned all over Greece; even more, it was renowned abroad.*

*...Evans was here before '25; it was in 1925 when we got to know him. I was a little child at that time; I had not even started school, that's for sure. He was a frequent visitor...we assume now that he knew that there were lots of antiquities in Archanes. He most certainly knew that...*

*He was a nice man, he had blond hair, yes, he was short, yes, of course he was short, and he adored us [her and her twin brother]. But we did not call him "Evans"; we called him "Eva" or "Evas". We used to say: "Dad, Evas is here" or "Evas dropped in to say hello" and when he was ready to leave we walked him to the door to see him out. My mom used to cook the rodokokkinisto [casserole meat] with pilaf for him – that was his favourite. And we all were very young then and he didn't have a wife, I don't remember him having a wife. She must have died earlier so he had neither children nor a wife. And he told my mother: "Why don't you give us one of your children?" My mother mentioned that to us...*

*When he was ready to leave, we escorted him up to the wooden bridge over a small dry stream, which is now covered; yes we escorted him and he used to take our photographs; he liked to do that [...]*

*... I will never forget his face, of course, always smiling; he was very close, very dear to us... and he kept visiting us for many years, my child...*

*And yes, after many years he died.*

At this point the old lady shows me one of her "heirlooms", a piece of paper with a poem under the heading "Villa Ariadne, 1915" and starts reading it to me despite the difficulties she has because of her short-sightedness. Then she explains that at one of his famous parties at Villa Ariadne in Knossos Evans had once invited her aunt, "who had a unique voice". Mrs Gemenaki wrote down the words of one of the songs that her relative sang that evening. She keeps this piece of paper as a family memento and plans to give it to her daughter, because these are "very historical and very touching memories" (*"Poli sigkinitika, as poume, pae"*).

Mrs Gemenaki's narrative framework has incorporated a variety of distant memories linked to current realities. For example, the famous British scholar, as well as details about his character and life, is linked to the importance of *Miriofito*, which, as she notes, after the architectural revival of Archanes in the 1990s and the subsequent opening of many new tavernas, unfortunately, has lost many of its clients.

The most important part of the lady's memories regards the first antiquities discovered at Archanes, those unearthed by Evans in Tourkogitonia, very close to the plot with the palatial building's remains:

*And he [Evans] used to come here; he sat in Miriofito. [Once] my mom said to me (I was a little child then): "Marika, let's go to Tourkogitonia to see the antiquities found there".*

*And we went there and we saw, well, a house and its walls were torn apart. Of course now there are modern houses built on that site, built by some ladies, their maiden name is Kazantzakis; well, they built the houses on top of the ancient site. At that time it was not forbidden to build on those sites like it is today that people are not allowed to build, but those women did. And I told Mr. Yannis [Sakellarakis] all about that and he told me "You are the first one to have seen those antiquities". It was like a big house, as big as a threshing court, or a wine-press; sure this is how it was. And it seems that it was covered afterwards and the [modern] house was built on top of it. But I do remember. And it is still underneath the house...*

Mrs Gemenaki is able to confirm the current fame of Archanes as a place of great antiquity and archaeological importance through the content of her personal memories. The now invisible antiquities that she remembers, in Minoan times belonged to "the Palace of Archanes", which now attracts the attention of visitors and great scholars. Her narration reconnects the different periods of Archanes, the Minoan age, the 1920s and the present in much the same way she reconnects the two parts of the ancient building, which literally and metaphorically is located at the intersection of official history and personal memories.

**-Material memories extended into a very long past**

*I am very much involved with tradition. Listen:  
 “Whoever tries hard to prevent tradition from dying,  
 earns a lot and loses not.”*

Lela Papadaki

Lela Papadaki is a farmer in her sixties. Many memories of her life revolve around specific objects which she wants to show me: an old clay jug used for the transport of wine, an old lamp used when there was no electricity supply, the upper floor of her neoclassical house.<sup>26</sup>

A world of embodied historical knowledge emerges when talking with her. The material culture of “traditional Archanes” as well as of her childhood and her family past is uncompromisingly correlated to the Minoan objects. The clay jars we see at Knossos “*were made and still are made by the potters of Thrapsano*”, she says. The metal lamp she has kept as a memory of the pre-electricity times is “*similar to those that replaced the clay lamps used since Minoan times*”. Even her memories from her childhood are filled with mentions of Knossos.

*When the Germans came, they took our house and we had nowhere to stay. This house was then a real palace [...] it had not been altered at all; everything was shining. I can still bring its picture before my eyes. [...] My father took us to our grandfather’s property, in Faskomilia, 1.5 km from Knossos. And you know, he thought of the Knossians as his neighbours, so he told me. And we visited Knossos [ the palace] every so often ... I’ve been in there lots of times ... Think of their bathrooms, just like what we have today. The Minoans had them way before anyone else. And also Ariadne’s baths...we used to sit on Minos’s throne and I thought that I myself wanted to be Minos. ... We*

---

<sup>26</sup> Her *archondiko*, built by her father at the beginning of the twentieth century, is the one that housed the Nazi authorities until the evening General Kreipe was kidnapped by members of the Cretan Resistance (see above, the section on Archaniote History and Economy).

*visited very often and stayed there for long hours. My grandfather showed me the theatre with the seats; it was just right there... And I pretended that I was somebody from those times... And after that we used to sit there and eat a sweet, a vanilla you know, and then go back home to that isolated place, 1,500 meters from Knossos. I was there just yesterday [...]*

Her desire to demonstrate the historical weight of her place makes her talk about numerous topics of both personal and collective importance. Recalling the death of her paternal grandfather, one of the heroic figures of Archanes during the 1897 rebellion against the Turks, she speaks of the locality called “Patitiria” (i.e., wine-presses):

*Papadaki: His father sent him to the battle... but they killed him...Bringing him back to the village he breathed his last, just here at Patitiria...*

*Esther: Where exactly is this locality?*

*Papadaki: Right here, where the school is built, there used to be a stone-pit (“petrokopio”) and they had carved basins where they put the grapes, pressed them and collected the must. Back then in Minoan times they also had vineyards and produced wine here. And we all know that there were storehouses in the Minoans’ palaces. [...]*

*My father used to have three wine-presses here ...and there were barrels all around the place and he used jugs to get the wine, like the one I showed you. And whatever was left of the wine, he used it to make raki in six large jars, earthen jars just like the ones you see at [the palace of] Knossos.*

Papadaki’s narration shows how ideas about the archaeological past can become an integral part of the Archaniote everyday life. Her ideas exemplify the transformation of a collective rhetoric, similar to the ones we have often seen in Cretan uses of the

Minoan past, into a personal narrative, an embodied personal experience interrelated with aspects of local history.

Despite the limited opportunities she had for higher education, Mrs Papadaki spends her free time taking notes of all interesting things she reads about Cretan folklore, history and archaeology and she shows her notebooks proudly, especially one containing information on the architectural phases of the Minoan palaces. She explains that she is “very attached to the village” (“*topikistis*”). Thus the emergence of Archanes as a significant archaeological locality, in reality reconfirms her way of thinking and her “localist” attitude. She explains how she condensed this into a few words written on the visitors’ book when the local archaeological museum opened for the public:

*When I went to the museum, I was wondering what to write in the book they have over there. And I wrote a mantinada that my mother used to sing for me: “The peak and the root met at the mountains today/ and I saw with my own eyes what I never thought I would see”. Which means that something extraordinary happened that day, you see, because” a peak and a root” are normally away from each other. I had never hoped that my soul would be full of such satisfaction and euphoria, the same thing I used to experience at Knossos as a child.*

**-Other material culture of a “longe durée”: Vathypetro and Mt Juktas**

*Antiquities at Vathypetro were of earlier times, way before Christ's time. People used to press the grapes there and make wine. I used to pass by this place on my way to the fields and I had no idea about the antiquities. We never got inside to have a look at them. So when my son came to visit us, we went there and the guard explained everything to us. Look, I said then, how long it has been since wine has been produced here... (Mrs Popi Zervoudaki)*

These words belong to Popi Zervoudaki, an old illiterate woman, who lived next to my Archaniote residence. My neighbour, who is no longer alive, always expressed her opinions about Archaniote issues with humour and great critical spirit. Popi told me once that she was happy that Archanes had become so famous but she had always preferred modern houses instead of the traditional ones because, as she said, she was made for luxuries (“*fthiagmenh gia loussa!*”). But when she discovered that in Vathypetro, in the area of the antiquities which she was not very interested to see, there was a wine-press “used before Christ”, she was really impressed. She also emphasised the fact that the Minoan locality was very close to the fields of her family, and this, I felt, immediately changed the value of both pieces of land, her own and that belonging to the “Archaeology”.

Another Archaniote woman, also illiterate, remembers her only visit to Vathypetro with a group of foreign people some years ago. Mrs Parali returned to the village after a very long stay in Athens and this makes her feel that she can compare things in both places. Although she keeps mentioning the positive significance of life in the capital, she points out the medical value of the local herbs. In her description, archaeological information is blended with her knowledge of the therapeutic qualities of oil and wine, as well as with the sacred meaning of these two liquids in the Christian faith. A new story of the ancient site is written through the recollection of that visit:

*I'm going to tell you the history of Vathypetro: Ten years ago, or let's say fifteen, we took a group of foreign tourists up to the Vathypetro area. The antiquities had not yet been taken care of but their history was known and whoever wanted to visit this factory of raki, oil and wine could do so. At that time [the Minoan era], people used to press the grapes with their feet and the wine flowed little by little and they filled small jugs at first. After that they filled larger jars and then they went on to final production.*

*Well, this wine was used as holy water or as medicine. When someone got sick, he would drink wine to get well. As for the oil: they used big stones to hit the olives and they took the oil, cleaned it and used it as ointment. Whoever was in pain would take a little of this, holy water they called it, and would spread it on his whole body and so he recovered.*

The woman also reconfirms this sort of old wisdom through references to the herbs growing on Mt Juktas. The recent discoveries of carbonised herbs in the palatial building excavations has led to the assumption that in Minoan Archanes, collection, use and perhaps export of herbs was taking place. As mentioned above, vases with some of these herbs today form part of the whole presentation of the archaeological site. The lady bemoans the indifference modern people show to these herbs, which, since the days of Vathypetron, have been used by the traditional doctors of Archanes. She affirms that she became pregnant with her son thanks to the herbs of Mt Juktas after advice given to her by an Archaniote midwife (*"palaini mami"*): *"Even scientists in Athens and a doctor working at Ippokration [an Athens Hospital] recognise that as long as Juktas exists we shouldn't take other medicines for some illnesses"* (*"kai i epistimi simera to anagnorizi na min pernoume farmaka afou iparhi o Juktas"*) she asserts, ascribing to the mountain's flora the qualities of "scientific medicines". The woman confirms her personal attitude to illness through a selection of specific historical information, acknowledged one way or another by people with different authority: doctors, archaeologists, wise old midwives and even the foreign tourists who some years ago visited Vathypetro to learn about oil and wine in Minoan times.



## **V. COUNTER-DISCOURSES ON THE MEANING OF TRADITION**

*The truth is that lots of efforts have been made so that the traditional aspect of the village is maintained, and to a great extent, say 80%, they were successful. But there were several interventions such as with the colours used to paint the houses... For example certain houses are painted in colours which today are considered as traditional but are not the ones used 100 years ago... So lots of things look “traditionalish” rather than traditional. (Anna Kanaki, painter)*

With these remarks the young Archaniote painter questions the authenticity of the village after the restorations. She acknowledges the efforts of scientists, local inhabitants and authorities to preserve heritage but she points out that what we think of today as traditional did not necessarily exist in the past that we want to revive. Apart from the perceived “inaccuracy” of this reproduced image, Anna’s words also make obvious the difficulties we encounter when we try to make things “look authentic”. Preserving or reproducing the past through the manipulation of its material forms involves a complex selection of some elements alongside an equally complex process of “forgetting” and understating others.

Yet there are some more resentful statements and views about the new image of Archanes which go beyond the accuracy of the employed aesthetic forms. These statements focus not so much on aesthetics but mainly on the deeper meaning and purpose of the recent changes.

Yannis Ventourakis is a young merchant and owner of a shop in the heart of the village. He restored his paternal house in the Archaniote spirit, respecting colours, materials and all decorative elements which hint at the old style of local architecture. Nevertheless, he believes that the use of European Union funds for the conservation programme, especially in the public spaces, is superficial (“*vitrina*”, *i.e. a display window*) and in practice “disorients” the village. He sees it as an effort without essence and like some other Archaniotes, he finds the opening of the so-called

“Archaniote traditional tavernas” that followed the “upgrading” of the village, very frivolous.

*What tradition? Can you see anything traditional? I see only the tavernas where the Herakliotes have dinner, five renovated houses and three stone slates on the square, which look all very kitsch to me. [...]*

*Archanes is “in”, it’s a kind of fashion which will soon be over; a few years maybe and then the Herakliotes will turn somewhere else. [...]*

*And who can assure me that all this procedure with the renovated houses is not a fraud? Just because the EU gave a little money to have the external walls of the houses painted? And how can we be sure that tomorrow or the day after we will not find ourselves to have signed up for works we didn’t even know we embarked on? [...]*

*All this is but a façade. Archanes was a rich rural area and now some people intend to ruin it. So much money is being spent just to show off, just for renovations and tavernas and the like but in appearance only. And when all of this is over, there will be no money even to restore the stones that have already started to break.*

Ventourakis openly questions the local interpretation of tradition in practical terms. For him tradition is something more than the colour of the houses and the stone-paved squares. The problem to be resolved is not the renovation of houses but of the declining viticulture because, this is *the real* tradition of the village; therefore, the incoming money should be used to support the Archaniote farmers instead of beautifying houses.

Ventourakis’s words introduce us to a basic detail of the conservation initiative: the time chosen for its realisation by the local authorities, a time of severe difficulties for the villagers due to the previous destruction of their vines by the louse. In the early 1990s, the programme was also presented as an opportunity to minimise the effects

of economic hardship on farmers. Yet the conservation project continued for years and the same happened with the problems in farming which in the meantime had been aggravated, due to the decrease of European Union subsidies to local farming. In reality, the same financial source, the EU, supports and downplays the Archaniote “traditions” simultaneously. On the one hand, it subsidises old architecture, traditional activities and “historical aesthetics”, while on the other, through its Common Agricultural Policies, it reduces the support offered to small scale farming in the Mediterranean as part of a new international agricultural market dynamics; but for many Archaniotes, this is the vital issue in their society, and since EU subsidies to farming will come to an end shortly (2013), farmers foresee even more difficult times.

In the eyes of those locals who correlate the programme with the current economic situation, what is publicised as a local cultural upgrading focuses on the support offered to those who “exploit tradition”, i.e., by attracting visitors at the recently opened “Archaniote tavernas” of the main square.

Therefore, economic factors are related to and implicated in the symbolic parameters of the cultural revival of Archanes – without *meaning*, however, that the reasons for the revival are to be found in the village’s declining agricultural economy. Nevertheless, talking proudly about the famous *rosaki* grape (when it is no longer cultivated) or about the ageless Archaniote landscape and the agricultural practices that have remained almost unaltered since Minoan times (whereas now these methods are declining) is perhaps a phenomenon which follows the same rationale as the discovery of the past and its value. The presentation of a tradition-bound society is a discursive attitude to practices which gradually become symbolic entities and lose their secured habitual character. People confront their society and its past, i.e., they “substantivise” it (cf. Thomas 1992), and “need to obtain information ... about the nature of what was supposedly... their own” (ibid: 72).<sup>27</sup>

The point of course is not to say that the transformation of self-evident practices into essentialised symbolic accounts of local traditions, often through the mediation of

---

<sup>27</sup> Here Thomas is referring to the custom of “kerekere” in Fiji.

specific institutions, leads to “inauthentic” or ‘invented’ images and representations; it is rather to understand part of the occurring revival of tradition and its overwhelming presence in the last few years. In other words, this is a transition from “practices and ideas which are simply done or thought, or simply take place, [to] those set up as definite entities to be reflected upon and manipulated by the people” (Thomas 1992: 64), as they enter the logic of a “post-traditional” society (Giddens 1994, cf. Dovey 1985). Within this logic, tradition gradually becomes a matter of conscious personal and collective choice, often based on the replications of meaning found by people in past material forms.

### **-The real traditions or cornerstones of Archanes**

Maria Xanthaki, the Archaniote lady who passionately described the protest at the Heraklion museum in 1979, has also been a strong supporter of the initiative to preserve the architectural heritage of Archanes. Yet, like Ventourakis, she questions the “real meaning of tradition” which, according to her, does not reside “*in the tavernas of the main square*”. She regards the number of these businesses and their popularity as a consequence of the conservation programme, which, as she argues, should have been accompanied by the improvement of the economic conditions of the locals. The so-called “upgrading of Archanes”, she claims, is not a real one: the local market is now silent and deserted because people do not have enough money to keep it alive. Even the coffee-shops in the market, those frequented by the locals, close at 7 o’ clock in the evening, whereas until the mid-1980s they were open until midnight. Xanthaki notices the paradox that because of financial difficulties local people cannot enjoy these restaurants located in their own town. These businesses are full of people coming from elsewhere. Being against a potential turn of the village to tourism, the lady wonders rhetorically if “*by making Archanes an extended taverna, the place will recover [i.e. from the economic crisis]*” (“*Omos me to na gini mia taverna i Arhana tha orthopodisi?*”)

On the other hand, neither she nor other Archaniotes would prefer to push visitors away from the village. This would be in sharp opposition to the principles of Archaniote hospitality and open-mindedness. The housepainter Vaggelis Horafakis

quoted earlier, also a strong supporter of the conservation programme and the preservation of Archaniote traditions, argues that rejecting tourism is not only impossible but also unreasonable. Such an “inhospitable attitude” would contradict the historical tradition of Cretans who have been travellers since the Minoan era:

*Can anyone say that he doesn't want to have tourism? It's as if he says that he doesn't want any people to come here. Can anybody say that? No one can. Besides, people always used to travel, to go places. Since ancient times, Greeks and Minoans have moved from place to place. The point is what kind of tourism you want.*

As a matter of fact, the common thread uniting all those who criticise aspects of the village's conservation programme is neither the rejection of tradition as irrelevant to modern people's lives nor the contestation of the actual value of restoring traditional houses. The major issue is to ensure that the upgrading of the village is an honest and radical return to the *real* traditions of Archanes, which, as Mrs Xanthaki asserts, are “indeed very special”:

*[The real traditions] are our holy foundations. I believe that they are our cornerstones and the worst thing to come on us is to bring this “construction” down. I doubt if we are doing the right thing as far as culture is concerned. What are we offering to the new generation? Does the new generation have ideals? How will it make the society better? I cannot see how.*

*[...]*

*Our people have been here since ancient times. Minoans were peaceful; they loved their homeland, and they were progressive. What about us? We have the means to progress and we have to do it the same way as our ancestors. But what do we do? We deviate and act like people do in America [...] The American way of life has been established here. Have our customs and traditions been maintained? Archanes is now unrecognisable! [...] In our neighbourhood people used to come out of their houses and sit down together with other people and talk about their work in the fields, about their problems*

*that they could share with each other; they used to help each other. Nowadays we are more and more alienated. [...] We don't respect or love each other any more, as we used to in the past. I'm really sorry to say these things but this is how it is!*

The special traditions of Archanes are its outstanding old houses, its special people, the fact that Archaniotes participated in all significant historical events both regionally and nationally, their high quality products and the solidarity offered to those needing it. Among these “holy foundations”, the Minoan past of Archanes stands as a binding force: it summarises the notion of Archaniote progress, and love for the homeland, people’s morality as well as many of their recent customs. In other words, in a period of increasing individualism, alienation and indifference for “real” traditions, ideas about this mythicised past, known and retrieved only through its material remains, can function, at least for some of the local residents, as an important and specifically local model inspiring action for a better future.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

*Persons make things and things make persons.*

Tilley 2004: 217

In Archanes, two different material pasts meet and operate together: that manifested in the restored houses and that discernible in the archaeological discoveries. The former is associated with a still remembered time of prosperity during the first decades of the twentieth century, owed mainly to agriculture. The latter has come as an admirable confirmation of the historical importance of the village in specific fields since the Bronze Age. Each material world is used to explain the other, and both inform the present. Moreover, in relation to the “biography” of the most delicate of all Archaniote “objects”, i.e., the rural landscape, relevant material culture dated to both periods objectify local agricultural history and aesthetic ideals now encapsulated in a very comprehensive notion of tradition.

By examining the negotiation of Archaniote heritage – occurring now in the village – I have attempted to show the interrelation of meanings attributed to the material culture dated to the Minoan era and the period prior to the Second World War. It is argued that the archaeological finds discovered in the area have acquired their current social significance through their correlation – social, symbolic and aesthetic – to the extensive conservation programme of local architecture undertaken by the village authorities.

The programme, which has been supported either discursively or financially, apart from the local authorities also by archaeologists, local intellectuals and the EU, has considerably changed the attitudes of the locals towards the meaning of old architecture. The restored houses, most of which are owned and inhabited by Archaniotes who benefited from the programme’s favourable terms, have now become signs of a remarkable local past whereas they were previously considered as old-fashioned dwellings, and some of them were abandoned. These traditional-style

domestic spaces are now largely incorporated into the notion of a collective history worth being remembered and, also, re-experienced.

Therefore, not only have people's houses been restored but their family pasts as well. Metaphors of kinship, thoroughly implicated in the transmission of property from one generation to another, have here found another, supplementary, practical and symbolic expression through their inclusion in local people's lives and the interest they show in bequeathing them, both literally and metaphorically, to future generations.

Furthermore, the very materiality of this personal and collective heritage that is now preserved has stimulated a broader re-working of the Archaniote identity by bringing the idealised conceptions of ancient history into the domain of people's everyday lives. The antiquities, the unquestionable sacred, national, but usually distant and abstracted heritage, have here discursively transcended the state-controlled space of excavated land plots and entered that of social interaction through their correlation to a "lived" past.

Thus the uncovered "*pelekia*" of the restored houses, i.e., the blocks of stone once worked by the honoured Archaniote masters, are linked to the fine masonry of the Minoan "palatial building" of Tourkogitonia; the fine handicrafts made by Archaniote women during the twentieth century to the ancient objects discovered at Fourni; the famed grapes produced by the Archaniote farmers until nowadays, to the Minoan wine-press unearthed at Vathypetro; the festival at the church of the Transfiguration of Christ on Mt Juktas to the ancient pilgrims who in Minoan times rode their donkeys to reach the sanctuary on the mountain and there practice their religious rituals.

Yet if these associations do not differ from the representations of several other places now entering the field of cultural tourism or from the Greek folklorists' narratives who have long fostered the ancient pedigree of many local customs, what has to be noted is that these conceptualisations of heritage now produce new discourses and statements on the meaning of local identity. These are literally materialised not only in the communal spaces of the village managed by individuals with political or



scientific authority but also in people's more private domains, as personal choices. What is now considered "traditional aesthetics" is adopted in the interior of houses, in shops, even in the recent "neo-traditional" residences Archaniotes build for their children. Many of the old objects, until recently considered as folklore museum pieces, now have new phases in their biographies for they are re-appropriated as family heirlooms in the interior of Archaniotes' houses. Finally, the Archaniote rural landscape is gradually (but still slowly) turned into a spectacle that offers its viewers a tradition-bound visual pleasure going back to Minoan times, confirming Samuel (1994: x) who writes that the ruling passions of each period, in this case the aesthetic enjoyment of historical landscapes, are deeply impressed on the "traditional forms", especially those presented as timeless and unaltered.

The rural-urban combination of the Archaniote economy and social organisation facilitated the accommodation of this new cultural idiom in which the reproduction of specific aspects of the past and the neglect of others gradually become a matter of choice, both personal and collective or even of a selected lifestyle (see Giddens 1994). The village's authorities, the mayor who "roots" the (European-funded) future of the village in its past, the people from other places who settle in this "appealing place", the citizens of Heraklion and the cultural tourists whom the recent traditional enterprises target, even the scientists who participate in local heritage projects and conferences and, undoubtedly, the EU which has supported many local initiatives, all contribute to this new cultural reality; they emphasise aspects of it or underplay others. They produce new cultural forms and representations; in a word, they shape and, often, are shaped themselves, by these "signs of history which are also signs *in* history" (cf. Parmentier 1987), in a quickly shifting present.

The Archaniote narratives on tradition as well as the perceived relevance of the Minoan past in the village's life are based to a large extent on the intertwining of personal and social memory. As both are mediated through the work of each other, personal ways of remembering family pasts are now seen through the perspective of what is considered a collective history. The personal memories of many of my informants concerning their childhoods, their families, their social or patriotic action in the past, etc. are now mediated through the appropriations of the village's widely publicised heritage which can go so far as to include, apart from the admired works

of fathers and grandfathers, the works of the Minoan Archaniotes, who have also left the remarkable and *tangible* signs in the village.

In fact, Archanes represents an interesting example of a broader phenomenon, that of the cultural emergence of localities in the global scene (see Appadurai 1995). The overall debate on Archaniote heritage highlights the importance of the place not simply as a local version of the national Greek culture, that is, a small sub-unit of the national construct, but also as one that supersedes nation-state through its association with concepts and values of “Europeanness”. Thus the revived, or rather, the re-framed Archaniote traditions are not only signs of the long historical and cultural continuity of the nation on Crete, but also material expressions of a specifically Archaniote reworking of European cultural principles. The European awards, the “interest” shown by the EU in financing and promoting local material culture and related activities, the arrival of European tourists interested in particularly “Archaniote” cultural features, landscapes and products shape a different relationship of the place to the meaning of Europe. Local knowledge produces reliably local subjects and neighbourhoods “within which such subjects can be recognised and are organised”, Appadurai argues (1997: 181). Here, this knowledge places local identity in new discursive contexts. It *produces* Archanes as a locality in the regional, national and European scene, as long as the village has something special to show in the palimpsest of European localities.

Thus, although tradition is usually thought of as being in opposition to modernity, and this was certainly the case in Greece, where old-style and “backward” material forms have been largely contrasted to notions of a fanciful and desired European-style progress (see Tsoukalas 1998 [1983]), Archanes exemplifies a complementary relationship between the two notions. This relationship is not founded solely on the rhetorical and usually abstract evocations of racial continuities from antiquity but on the very materiality of lived material forms, which make the village appear in local, regional and tourist discourses as the “most authentic” and at the same time “most European” place on the island. The “introverted and ugly village of 30 years ago” is being transformed into an “appealing village to visit and to live in” showing exactly how the material forms of things, as embedded within specific social and economic relations, affect the way people act and think for and about themselves.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

*Time present and time past  
Are both perhaps present in time future,  
And time future contained in time past.  
If all time is eternally present  
All time is unredeemable.  
What might have been is an abstraction  
Remaining a perpetual possibility  
Only in a world of speculation.*

T. S. Eliot

“Burnt Norton”, *Four Quartets*, 1943

As a child, every time I saw images from the North Portico of Knossos I immediately recognised the monument from its nice red columns. I identified it with a very old, very special and very ...Cretan civilisation. The Minoan goddesses tamed snakes, women wore unique dresses and all Minoans never made wars. As an archaeology student, I learnt to date and classify the Minoan objects once traded throughout the Eastern Mediterranean; and that the art of the Minoans was naturalist (“*fysiokratiki*”) because of their attachment to the natural world but less so than that of the Mycenaeans who conquered the island in the Late Bronze Age. I scrutinised the stylistic changes noticed in different groups of Minoan vases and the architectural layers of collapsed buildings. Studying beautiful objects was a great pleasure and, as my Minoanist colleagues argued, it was more so if you could research them in Crete, the island which, unlike other Greek places, had remained very much attached to its unique traditions.

It took me many years to realise that the scientific impartiality of my knowledge on Minoan art, of the attended university lectures – largely based on Evans’s *Palace of Minos* – or even of the ancient ruins themselves, including the characteristic

Knossian columns, were contested subjects. And it took me a lot longer to realise that not only the official representation of the displayed antiquities but also that of the Cretan traditions which I was looking for in “typical” local landscapes, in forms of art, in the *paniyiria*, the summer festivals held in many villages, or in spur-of-the-moment chats with elderly Cretans at local coffee-shops bore the intermediate and often powerful imprint of many and often controversial “subjectivities” in relation to the so frequently evoked ancient Cretan history. Living on the island made clear that the fascinating – for me and many others – Minoan remains did not produce a single history but many, all of which were based on a multiple, diverse and constructive use of authoritative specialist knowledge.

In this thesis, I have tried to manifest some of these attitudes to the past and to show how archaeological conceptualisations of Minoan material culture, far from being an “objective” and abstract scientific knowledge kept in mental distance, are deeply entangled in the making of local “historicitities”. I have explained how perceptions of the Minoan culture and values attached to it encode principles, views and beliefs diversely shared by Cretans and other groups related to the ancient sites or the island in general, including its researchers and its visitors. These are perceptions that fix memories and ideas to the Cretan land and make the Minoan monuments, especially Knossos, sites of historical identity.

For Cretans, Knossos forms a fundamental metaphor for local history. It is an archetypical monument encompassing cultural, patriotic and aesthetic virtues encountered in many later periods of the island’s past while it constitutes the basis through which a linear conception of Cretan history is appropriated, symbolically “remembered” and reproduced. Because Minoan society in particular has been so highly idealised, archaeological knowledge becomes even more implicated in the present as a lens through which current conditions are refracted and negotiated. In these “refractions”, Knossos works as a visual, textual and material metaphor that allows people to understand both the past and the present, to connect space and time, to correlate things and differentiate them from others; after all, metaphors are all about the understanding of one thing in terms of another and connecting the world together (Tilley 2002: 24-25).

To summarise, for many people who produce either official or unofficial representations of Minoan culture, Minoan Crete is a significant example of a society full of action: in the arts, in technology, in commerce, in agriculture, in the enlightened rule of its governors. But it is not only that; as the by-product of interrelated local, national and international narratives, it also constitutes the quintessence of Cretanness and Europeanness and it is seen as the forerunner of classical civilisation. On the other hand, notwithstanding its Europeanness, Minoan Crete blurs the borders between low and high culture, or even between history and mythology, both fundamental European cultural distinctions. It also enters the private domain of people's lives, where it mixes personal and collective memories as evoked by the materiality of ancient and recent objects. It stands for concepts of tradition and modernity, while it endlessly reshapes the content of both according to context and employed perspective. Yet above all, it mediates social ties and objectifies the meaning of specific social values pursued by people when they visit, preserve, debate, contest, reproduce, study or simply enjoy the ancient remains, reminding us, as Rowlands has cogently put it, that "heritage, whilst ostensibly about the past, is always about the future" (2002: 113).

## 1. ISSUES OF TIME, PLACE AND IDENTITY

*More than a specific set of practices, modernity is a story that people tell themselves about themselves in relation to Others.*

Rofel 1992, cited in Sutton 1998: 35

Although dated to the Bronze Age, Knossos is a striking example of a monument associated with conflicting and, at the same time, complementary conceptualisations of tradition and modernity. Since the time of its discovery, the site has “accommodated” qualities and meanings associated with both cultural constructions, according to the involved people’s varied hopes, fears, views and assessments of their position, literally and metaphorically, in a broad social, geographical, political and scientific milieu. In this context, the notions of historical continuity, on the one hand, and change and innovation, on the other, have been constantly coupled with the “traditional” and the “modern” meanings of Knossos respectively, depending on the occurring representation, its performance and/or its addressee.

The first to link Minoan culture with modernity was, of course, Evans. For him as well as for many archaeologists until today, Knossos has been the tangible proof that the cultural origins of Europe had to be sought in Bronze Age Crete, not only due to the discovery of a script, i.e., a basic element signifying the sophistication of the Cretan pre-classical civilisation, but also on account of the characteristic technical, religious, and aesthetic qualities of the unearthed remains which fitted the epistemological and ideological construct of “Europe” in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

After being tailored to the concept of a 5,000 year old Greek cultural sequence, this “official” view was adopted by both the national and the Cretan relevant narratives. As indicated by its numerous representations both inside and outside academia, Knossos is the unquestioned cradle of Western civilisation and by implication, of European modernity. However, this rhetorical struggle of Greece and particularly of

Crete to be acknowledged as both modern and European through their link to antiquity is also often supplemented or counteracted by the incorporation of the Minoan past into the island's long-dated traditions, i.e., the other pole of the Greek cultural construct.

In this broad framework, when Knossos is competitively compared to the established ideals of Classical Hellenism, it is considered “modern” and “original” (in style, aesthetics and meaning), “pioneering” (as predecessor of the instructive meanings of the Classical Age) or “innovative” (even when compared to our own “modern” society), all with or without quotes.

When associated with “Europeanness”, the field where the concept of modernity has been formed par excellence, Knossos is also considered in its pioneer manifestation. In the line with Evans's romantic and evolutionary thought, this rather diffuse attitude reproduces the view of Europe as uniting all its constituent parts under the values of “culture”, “justice” and “progress”. On the other hand, Knossos can function as the counterbalance of Europe, especially when current Western praxis and politics are seen negatively, i.e., in dissonance with the social values inherited from the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, or when these values are rejected altogether as in the case of new-age discourses. In these contexts, the Minoan heritage may express a “modernity” deeper and much more valuable than that associated with Western practices, in other words, a modern story based on the didactic meanings of the past.

Linked either to tradition or to modernity, as this thesis has illustrated, meanings ascribed to the Minoan archaeological heritage provide the field where the local, the national and the global, or generally “the Other” (time, place or people) can be mutually defined and played out. In this complex game of identity making, Crete negotiates its cultural role by means of its continuous “symbolic detours through the past” (Hall 1999: 43), and in particular the Minoan period.

Nevertheless, although the Cretan discourse on the importance of antiquity was born and matured within the framework of the Greek nation-state's ideology, it does not always identify with it. The island has always stressed its distinctiveness in cultural

terms, not in order to contest the national account but, rather, in order to ensure Crete's special position in it. In fact, by bringing the past into play, Crete reshapes and "amends" the national discourse. The long-term struggles against Ottoman rule, the participation of Cretans in Greek war operations in the Balkans, the battle of Crete against the Nazis and the locals' heroic resistance offer only *some* of the proof that Greece is "indebted" to Crete. Yet this debt is extended further in time and significance and reaches the Bronze Age: Minoan Crete is the unquestionable origin of almost all things that Greece is or can be proud of. To put it differently, if Classical Hellenism provided the basis of the *ur-myth* of European modernity, Minoan Crete formed the primordial cultural context in which all Greek and Western historical exclusiveness is seen to reside. Thus, if (or, rather, when) identity is constructed through affirmative similarities with the *Other*, then Crete's past is profoundly Greek and deeply European; alternatively, i.e., when it is constructed through difference, Crete is "unique", just like its remarkable past.

This point of view is also consistently present in almost every "symbolic conflict" (Bourdieu 1991) occurring between Crete and the rest of the world. The latter "has to acknowledge" the Cretan "Europeanness" together with the importance and the island's contribution to history: although at the margin of Europe and "poor" for many centuries, especially after its subjugation under Turkish rule, at a symbolic and cultural level Crete is far ahead of or even superior to the powerful Western "forces" and should be accepted by them as a respectable partner in current political, economic and cultural processes.

In the domain of traditions, Minoan Crete objectifies them in many ways. It authenticates local customs and gives meaning to local practices, to the performance of "revived" practices which represent the place to visitors; it may even justify personal choices when these are seen as rooted in a very old past.

In cases of crisis such as during the protests in front of the Heraklion museum "against the uprooting of heritage", or when Cretans reflect on globalisation, the Minoan heritage is turned into a local collective property, a powerful local tradition tantamount to a symbolic source of inspiration and strength for resistance. Similarly, in cases of spiritual and intellectual quests or disillusionment with current social



conditions, such as those described by feminists and new-agers, etc., it is a promising and positive example coming from the island's past that can guide efforts for a better future.

Cretans, therefore, have re-appropriated the national ideology around the significance of classical antiquity by extending the argument into older times, i.e., the Minoan Age and into a more distant place, i.e., their island. The axes of the discourse were not difficult to find: for more than two hundred years the modern Greek state has imported the Western ideology of the classical Greek legacy as inherited by the “enlightened” West and, later, by the “regenerated” modern Hellenism. This was an ideology that had to be proved, one way or another, in all cultural fields. But Crete, as I hope this thesis has revealed, does something more than simply repeat the above national rhetoric and project the debate into a period before the classical age and territories located south of Athens. It provides (or, rather, it aspires to provide) an alternative discourse on cultural production based on prominent cultural conditions; a discourse encompassing its archaeological past but also its landscapes, its “genuine and ecologically produced” food, and the special character of both its “Hellenic” and “Romeic” traditions. Crete combines and remodels the two. It endeavours to minimise the contrasts between them when possible by presenting a case where the Romiosini, “the ideology of intimacy” (Herzfeld, 1987: 65), is united to Hellenism. Crete attempts to reconcile structures with agency, rules with strategy, the symbolic with the everyday. It portrays all the above as a distinct source of resistance to global homogenisation and offers this all-inclusive cultural construction to its visitors, to the rest of Greece and, above all, to its people who are preparing for the fluid, unstable, but mainly discursive, race of (a now) globalised modernity.

### **-“The Future of the Past”: Archanes and modern Knossos**

In this framework, Archanes and Knossos present two apparently oppositional paradigms concerning the meaning and importance of tradition in regard to the archaeological heritage of their areas. At Knossos the “traditional” meaning of the monument, strictly intertwined with the hegemonic and authoritative reading of the

surrounding landscape by the Archaeological Service, is persistently contested. At Archanes, there is a generalised evocation of antiquity in current practices which discursively justifies local choices and represents the place as amalgamating – through its recently “revived” traditions – the antithetical conceptions of ancient and modern time. In both cases, the production of relevant discourses about “the future of the past”, to use the slogan recently in vogue by the local authorities of Archanes, positions them within a network of power and broadly social relations, local, national and international, which, in turn, produce these people as social subjects.

For modern Knossians, “tradition”, in its relation to concepts of history, environment and heritage, represents a series of aesthetic standards and imposed practices that complicate their already troublesome relationship with the nation-state’s bureaucracy and its ambiguous exercise of power. In other words, national ideals on the meaning of landscapes of ruins obstruct modernisation and progress, as the Knossians envisage them. These values Knossians are called on to renounce in order to support the nation’s perspective of ancient heritage as well as the tourists’ quests according to which a monument’s landscape has to demonstrate its persuasive ties to both history and nature.

On the other hand, what makes the case of Archanes special in the Greek context is not merely that the place approaches the ancient material heritage rather positively than negatively (since the unearthed antiquities affect people’s property rights to a limited extent) but that it reshapes the nationalist ideas on the importance of antiquity by incorporating it into the context of a “post-traditional” logic in which the approach to tradition becomes gradually a matter of personal and collective choice (Giddens 1994). Moreover, contrary to other places in Greece where the evocation of antiquity suggests the cultural and historical superiority of the country as the “cradle of national and Western deals”, in Archanes, this rhetoric has become part of a socially experienced time and space which combine attitudes to the ancient past with the local cultural, economic and social conditions.

Inextricably tied up to this recent emergence of the ancient past in social life, the conservation project of local architecture and public spaces undertaken at the village has changed not only the image of Archanes but also its significance in the eyes of

all those having a relationship with it, especially Herakliotes, Cretans in general, and, to a lesser extent, an increasing number of visitors. More importantly, the project consolidated the symbolic importance of this image among Archaniote people who now act and talk about themselves and their past through the recently formulated narrative on the Archaniote heritage while they refract their personal and family stories through the lens of the village's history. As Tonkin has argued, "memory and cognition are partly constituted by social relations and thus are also constitutive of society. We are simultaneously bearers and makers of history, with discursive representations of pastness as one element in this generation and reproduction of social life" (1992: 97).

I believe that this recent discursive representation of the Archaniote past can be explained, at least partially, by the fact that it has relied on a strong connection with the lived and socially important space of houses and (and to a lesser extent) the cultivated vineyards. In contrast to the rejection of the living population from the landscape of Knossos or the belatedly acknowledged tradition in the almost depopulated neighbourhood of Anafiotika in Athens (Caftanzoglou 2001), the Archaniote project pursued a monumentalised but not "museumified" environment which makes use of people's familial memories and what is now seen as "authentically traditional" lived spaces.

The inclusion (instead of displacement, as in Knossos) of local family stories into the collective image of the village has reshaped the usual nationalist rhetoric about the "ancient ancestors". As long as ownership was not affected by the official efforts to protect cultural heritage (at least, no more than before the conservation project), the "idiom of the family", the logic of descent identified with the inheritance of material property, as Margaret Kenna (1976, cf. Just 1998: 337) and many researchers have noticed in the Greek society, has found here a symbolic ground to develop in which material culture has played an active role.

Finally whereas elsewhere "modernity" is blamed for the loss of the "authentic face of Crete", in Archanes, the interrelated evocation of local traditions and "Europeanness" produces a new local discourse that some times bypasses the national, or even the Cretan as a totality, without of course contesting them. In fact,

the Archaniote conceptualisation of the past as materialised in its heritage should be understood as part of a global system of practices and beliefs promoting (and producing) cultural difference on a small spatial scale. And Archanes, for the time being, represents the particular within the particular, Archanes within Crete, Crete within Greece, Greece within the world. More, perhaps, than any other place on the island, it appropriates a global order of things and produces a local, specifically Archaniote response to it.

## 2. A PLACE “OUTSIDE ALL PLACES”

*There are also, and probably in every culture, in every civilisation, real places – actual places, places that are designed in the very institution of society, which are sorts of actually realised utopias in which the real emplacements, all the other real emplacements that can be found within the culture, are, at the same time, represented, contested, and reversed, sorts of places that are outside all places, although they are actually localisable. Because they are utterly different from all the emplacements that they reflect or refer to, I shall call these places, “heterotopias” as opposed to utopias.*

Foucault 2000: 178

Throughout the thesis it became obvious that Knossos is profoundly implicated in the creation of a series of “geographical” processes: At a symbolic and representational level it functions as a “map” that captures the “essence” of Crete and the Heraklion region for both its people and its visitors; it is entangled in hegemonic and anti-hegemonic organisation of space; it is involved in contradicting ways of seeing and approaching the natural environment through the monument’s “proper” or “improper” inclusion in it and, finally, it is constantly related to all sorts of *places*, *spaces* and *landscapes* on and of Crete through people’s symbolic engagement with them.

Therefore it can be argued that Knossos “makes” Crete. Paradoxically though, in relation to Cretan people, such significance is attributed to the monument not through direct bodily and visual interaction with the actual ancient remains as happens, for example, with the Athenian Acropolis, but with their reproductions. The invisibility of the antiquities from the city of Heraklion, their condition of preservation, the absence of complete structures (like the Parthenon on the Acropolis, for example) and, mainly, their authoritative exclusion from everyday experience have contributed to the creation of a peculiar relationship between Cretans, especially the Herakliotes, and their venerated, but somewhat isolated and secluded, site. With the exception of some, usually very limited, visits to the site

during the school years, people's contact with Knossos takes place mainly through its plentiful representations, visual and textual, a considerable part of which is also used in the presentation of the site to its visitors. This is a relationship based on and nourished by increasing forms of a local "minoanised" culture and the extensive replication of Minoan signs which tend to lose their material and tangible dimensions and take the place of what would be possibly considered "real" Knossos.

Undoubtedly, the isolation of (tangible) Knossos is in accordance with the distant, "sacralised" (see Hamilakis and Yalouri 2000) and finally a-historical significance of the ancient Greek material past which only in some "commemorative" ceremonies and practices is itself re-enacted (e.g., in the ceremony that took place inside the site for the Cretan reception the Olympic flame). Knossos, however, represents an outstanding case of an extremely important monument in symbolic terms that local people do not see, or – to use one of the eloquent metaphors ubiquitous in the English language which link the sense of sight with understanding – Knossos represents "a way of seeing" things not really seen.

The way that this institutionalised representation of Knossos operates within Cretan society makes me think of the place as a *heterotopia* (Foucault 2000). Foucault, who coined the concept, has described heterotopias as places "with a different hierarchy" linked to contestations "both mythical and real of the space in which we live" (ibid: 179). Heterotopias are real spaces, some of which represent a break with "traditional" time: they perform a sense of a quasi-eternity, as do museums, libraries, etc. or are a-temporal, like fairgrounds, for example (ibid: 182-183).

In Crete, although everybody can indicate the physical location of the monument and its characteristic features, the institutionalised isolation of the site does not enable a physical involvement of the local people with it. Knossos is an extremely important place under surveillance with its own very special operational hierarchy and located somewhere "out there". It accumulates time in "another space", at the antipodes of all "remaining" space, that of the city of Heraklion. It is, in Foucault's terms, "a different real space as perfect, as meticulous, as well- arranged as ours is disorganised, badly arranged, and muddled" (ibid.: 184). This distance (which, at least visually, does not exist in the case of many other symbolically important

ancient monuments) in a way facilitates the local appropriations of Knossos as the cradle of civilisation as well as the overall making of the Minoan myth. The “other space” of Knossos becomes an adequately confined “bank of imagination” in Cretan society. The representation of a sacred garden as a microcosm in the patterns of a Persian rug, described by Foucault as an heterotopic space and the garden in general, this “sort of blissful, universalising heterotopia [occurring] since the beginnings of antiquity” (ibid: 182) are examples that match, I suggest, the imposition of a very important time –the Minoan past – on the confined, disciplined, organised and somewhat distant space of the actual site.

On the other hand, despite the occurring de-materialisation of Knossos and the increasing substitution of physical contact with the monument for that with its visual signs, people’s (not only tourists’) encounters with the Minoan culture also require some “concrete circumstances of emplacement” (Casey 1996: 46). This is perhaps one of the reasons Evans’s reconstructions are now protected and meticulously cared for. Their remarkable impact on all parts involved and their “embeddedness” in social memory and most people’s imagination are such that the Greek state has adjusted its strict policy according to which only “genuine remains” are protected: now, every effort is being made to preserve the “original reconstructions”.

With its blurred boundaries between what really existed and what was imagined, between what has survived in the ground and what a society decides to preserve for its didactic and social content, between the familiar and the distant as well as between perceptions of truth and scientific inaccuracy, Knossos has challenged and modified commonplace and hitherto self-evident definitions of authenticity and heritage.

### 3. THE REMARKABLE PERSISTENCE OF A VISION: THE “EDENIC ORDER” OF MINOAN CRETE

A final inference that can be drawn concerns the success of Evans's interpretations of Minoan society, even nowadays when archaeologists propose different versions of the past.

Evans created, literally and metaphorically, Knossos and Minoan civilisation as he assumed they existed on Crete in the Bronze Age. His powerful position within British archaeology (and its offshoot, the annex of the British School at Knossos), his talent, passion and persuasiveness in supporting his vision, as well as his social and financial status, all contributed to establishing his views not only among his successors but also among all people involved in the reception of his construct. Thus, unlike other postcolonial archaeological paradigms, Evans's theories on Minoan Crete did not receive any severe criticisms until the 1990s, when a limited number of Minoanists decided to “deconstruct” his assumptions.

Yet more than the aforementioned factors, i.e., the scholar's position, talent and power, what has actually discouraged or even prevented attempts of contestation has been *the content* of his speculation itself. In fact, Evans's Minoan Crete has met the expectations and accommodated the visions of many of the collectivities involved, including that of the archaeologists who inherited his legacy and contributed to the impressive growth of Minoan studies and the astonishing proliferation of books and articles on Minoan sites, objects, economy, and social organisation.

But Evans's construct as reproduced (or left unchallenged) by his successors has played one more major “heterotopic” role: it has actually worked as a most powerful and influential representation of a long-lost paradise. His Minoan Crete served as a bank of imagination for folklorists, teachers, artists, for people living and visiting the island as well as for those looking in the past for a truth worth defending and following in social action, in intellectual creations or even in life in general. All of them could find something in the colourful relics of the island's prehistoric past.



Besides, the unearthed and reconstructed remains have also allowed the “consumption of otherness” through museum visits and other tourism-related activities. The period between 1700 and 1450 BC, the so-called Neo-palatial considered as the pinnacle of the Cretan Bronze Age, has come to signify an Edenic order that people have allegedly lost at some point but have never stopped to represent, one way or another.<sup>1</sup>

The need for a less “rationalistic” way of thinking; for true sociality before the advent of the perceived as negative features of our times; for peace and freedom; for a closer contact with nature; also, the charm exercised by a society whose writing has not been deciphered; and the hypothesis of the powerful role of women in a non man-led society, all have kept Evans’s perspective and people’s interest and fascination with Minoan (and modern) Crete not only alive but also greater than ever.

In addition, the tendency to eco- and cultural tourism, the revival of traditions with the considerable financial and ideological support provided by the European Union and people’s increasing concerns with the natural environment create new fields where nostalgia for this long-lost paradise can be played out. Archanes is a case in point where Evans’s construct is extended through the creation of new traditional/minoanised “culturalised” practices that entail people’s sensitivities to the preservation of heritage (built and natural), the production and consumption of healthy products and the acknowledgement of tradition as a crucial part of the present.

Finally, it has to be mentioned that despite the criticism that Evans’s restorations have received concerning their “inauthenticity”, it is precisely these structures, mainly the image of them, which through their social use in the present are coupled with fascination, with concepts of modernity and tradition, or even with human sociality and its pursuit. The Minoan material heritage condenses the cultural

---

<sup>1</sup> In relation to nation-states’ essentialisms and people’s responses to and negotiation of them, Michael Herzfeld has called this way of approaching “an unspoiled and irrecoverable” past *structural nostalgia*, i.e., the “collective representation of an Edenic order – a time before time – in which the balanced perfection of social relations has not yet suffered the decay that affects everything human” (1997: 109).

properties of an idealised past which was and still appears inexhaustible, charming and, above all, indispensable.

## *References*

- Abram, S., Waldren, J. and Macleod, D. (eds.) 1997. Tourists and Tourism: Identifying People with Places. Oxford and New York: Berg.
- Ahrweiler, H. and Aymard, M. (eds) 2000. Les Européens. Paris: Hermann, 2000.
- Alcock, S. E. 2002. Archaeologies of the Greek Past. Landscape, Monuments, and Memories. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Althusser, L. 1971. Ideology and ideological state apparatuses. *In* Lenin and Philosophy. (Trans. from the French by Ben Brewster) New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Anderson, B. 1983. Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. London: Verso.
- Andriotis, K. 2001. Tourism planning and development in Crete: recent tourism policies and their efficacy. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 9, 298-316.
- Apostolakis, A. and Jaffry, S. 2005. Heterogeneous preferences for Greek heritage attractions. Tourism Economics, 11, 225-45.
- Appadurai, A. 1981. The Past as a Scarce Resource. Man 16, 201-219.
- Appadurai, A. 1986. Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value. *In* Appadurai, A. (ed.) The Social Life of Things. Commodities in Cultural Perspective. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 3-63.

- Appadurai, A. 1995.** The Production of Locality. *In* Fardon, R. (ed.) Counterworks: Managing the Diversity of Knowledge. London and New York: Routledge, 204-225.
- Appadurai, A. 1997.** Modernity at large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalisation. Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press.
- Appadurai, A. and Breckenridge, C. 1988.** Why Public Culture? Public Culture Bulletin, Vol. 1, No 1, 5-9.
- Appadurai, A. and Breckenridge, C. 1996.** Public Modernity in India. *In* Appadurai, A. and Breckenridge, C. (eds.) Consuming Modernity: Public Culture in Contemporary India. University of Minnesota Press, 1-20.
- Appadurai, A. and Breckenridge, C. 1999 (1992).** Museums are Good to Think. Heritage on View in India. *In* Boswell, D. and Evans J. (eds.) Representing the Nation: A Reader. Histories, Heritage and Museums. London and New York: Routledge in association with The Open University, 404-420.
- Archanes Acts 1992.** The Architectural Identity of Archanes. Acts of the Conference held in Archanes (8-12-1992). Archanes: Municipality of Archanes and other institutions.
- Ardener, E. 1989.** The construction of history: "vestiges of creation". *In* Tonkin E., McDonald, M. and Chapman, M. (eds.) History and Ethnicity, London and New York: Routledge, 22-33.

**-Argyrou, V. 1996.** Tradition and Modernity in the Mediterranean. The Wedding as Symbolic Struggle. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**-Århem, K. 1998.** Powers of Place. Landscape, Territory and Local Belonging in Northwest Amazonia. *In* Lovell, N. (ed.) Locality and Belonging. London and New York: Routledge, 78-102.

**-Bakhtin, M. 1981.** The Dialogic Imagination. (With an introduction by J. M. Holquist) Austin: University of Texas Press.

**-Ball, E. L. 2003.** Greek food after mousaka: Cookbooks, “local” culture, and the Cretan diet. Journal of Modern Greek Studies, Vol. 21, Number 1, 1-36.

**-Barthes 1981.** Camera Lucida. New York: Hill and Wang.

**-Baudrillard, J. 1983.** Simulations. New York: Semiotext(e).

**-Baudrillard, J. 1988.** Selected Writings. Ed. by Mark Poster. Cambridge: Polity Press.

**-Bauman, Z. 1996.** From Pilgrim to Tourist - or a Short History of Identity. *In* Hall, S. and Du Gay, P. (eds.) Questions of Cultural Identity. London: Sage Publications, 18-36.

**-Becker, J. S. 1998.** Selling Tradition. Appalachia and the Construction of an American Folk, 1930-1940. Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press.

**-Bender, B. 1992.** Theorising landscapes, and the prehistoric landscapes of Stonehenge. Man 27, 735-55.

**-Bender, B. 1993a.** Introduction: Landscape, meaning and action. In Landscape. Politics and Perspectives. Providence and Oxford: Berg, 1-17.

**-Bender, B. (ed.) 1993b.** Landscape. Politics and Perspectives. Providence and Oxford: Berg.

**-Bender, B. 1997.** Multivocalism in Practice: Alternative Views of Stonehenge. In Denford, G.T. (ed.) Representing Archaeology in Museums. Winchester: The Museum Archaeologist 22, Society of Museum Archaeologists, 55-58.

**-Bender, B. 1998.** Stonehenge. Making Space. Oxford and New York: Berg.

**-Bender, B. 2002.** Landscape and Politics. In Buchli, V. (ed.) The Material Culture Reader. Oxford and New York: Berg, 135-140.

**-Benetaki, A. 1992.** The protection of traditional settlements. The settlement of Archanes. (*I prostasia ton paradosiakon ikismon. O ikismos ton Arhanon*) In The Architectural Identity of Archanes. Acts of the Conference held in Archanes (8-12-1992). Archanes: Municipality of Archanes and other institutions, 13-14.

**-Bennett, T. 1988.** The Exhibitionary Complex. New Formations 4, 73-102.

**-Benveniste, R. 1999.** Memory and Historiography. (*Mnimi ke istoriografia*). In Benveniste, R. and Paradellis, Th. (eds.) Routes and Places of Memory. Historical and Anthropological Approaches. (*Diadromes ke topi tis mnimis. Istorikes ke anthropologikes prosegis*). Athens: Alexandria, 11-26. [In Greek]

**-Bhabha, H. K. (ed.) 1990.** Nation and Narration. London and New York: Routledge.

**-Bhabha, H. K. 1994.** The Location of Culture. London and New York: Routledge.

**-Billig, M. 1995.** Banal Nationalism. London: Sage.

**-Bintliff, J. L. 1984.** Structuralism and Myth in Minoan Studies. Antiquity LVIII, pp. 33-38.

**-Bloch, M. 1998a.** Time, Narratives and the Multiplicity of Representations of the Past. *In* How We Think They Think. Boulder and Oxford: Westview Press, 100-113.

**-Bloch, M. 1998b.** How We Think They Think. Boulder and Oxford: Westview Press.

**-Bloch, M. 1998c.** Internal and External Memory: Different Ways of Being in History. *In* How We Think They Think. Boulder and Oxford: Westview Press, 67-84.

**-Bohlin, A. 1998.** The Politics of Locality. Memories of District six in Cape Town. *In* Lovell, N. (ed.) Locality and Belonging. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 168-188.

**-Boissevain, J. 1996.** Introduction. *In* Boissevain, J. (ed.) Coping With Tourists. European Reactions to Mass Tourism. Providence-Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1-26.

**-Bond, G. T. and Gilliam, A. 1994.** Introduction. *In* Bond, G.T. and Gilliam, A. (eds.) Social Construction of the Past. Representation as Power. London and New York: Routledge, 1-22.

**-Borofsky, R. 1987.** Making History: Papukan and Anthropological Constructions of Knowledge. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**-Bourdieu, P. 1977.** Outline of a Theory of Practice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**-Bourdieu, P. 1991.** Language and Symbolic Power. Cambridge: Polity.

**-Bourdieu, P. 1992.** Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste. London and New York: Routledge.

**-Bourdieu, P. 1993.** The Field of Cultural Production. Essays on Art and Literature. Edited and Introduced by R. Johnson. Cambridge: Polity.

**-Boyarín, J. (ed.) 1994.** Remapping Memory: The politics of TimeSpace. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

**-Brown, A. 1983.** Arthur Evans and the Palace of Minos. Oxford: Ashmolean Museum.

**-Brown, A. 1993.** Before Knossos...Arthur Evans's Travels in the Balkans and Crete. Oxford: University of Oxford, Ashmolean Museum.



**-Brown, D. 1996.** Genuine fakes. *In* Selwyn, T. (ed.) The Tourist Image. Myths and Myth making in Tourism. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 33-47.

**-Brown, K. S. 1994.** Seeing Stars: Character and Identity in the Landscapes of Modern Macedonia. Antiquity 68, 784-786.

**-Buchli, V. 2002.** Introduction. *In* Buchli, V. (ed.) The Material Culture Reader. Oxford and New York: Berg, 1-22.

**-Buck Sutton, S. 1997.** Disconnected Landscapes: Ancient Sites, Travel Guides, and Local Identity in Modern Greece. *Anthropology of East Europe Review* 15, 27-39.

**-Burns, P. 1999.** An Introduction to Tourism and Anthropology. London and New York: Routledge.

**-Cadogan, G. 2004.** “The Minoan distance”: The impact of Knossos upon the twentieth century. *In* Cadogan, G., Hatzaki, E. and Vasilakis, A. (eds.), Knossos: Palace, City, State. BSA Studies 12, 537–46.

**-Cadogan, G. 2006.** From Mycenaean to Minoan: an exercise in myth making. *In* Darque P., Fotiadis M. and Polychronopoulou O. (eds) “Mythos”, La Préhistoire Égéenne du XIX<sup>e</sup> au XXI<sup>e</sup> Siècle après J.-C. Table Ronde International, Athènes, 21-23 Novembre 2002. Paris: Ecole Française (Bulletin de Correspondence Hellénique, suppl. 46), 49-55.

**-Caftanzoglou, R. 2001.** Sti Skia tou Ierou Vrahou: Topos ke Minimi sta Anafiotika. (*In the Shadow of the Sacred Rock: Place and Memory in Anafiotika*) Athens: Ellinika Grammata. [In Greek]

**-Casey, E. S. 1987.** Remembering. A Phenomenological Study. Bloomington and Indianapolis:Indiana University Press.

**-Casey, E. S. 1993.** Getting Back into Place. Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

**-Casey, E. S. 1996.** How to Get from Space to Place in a Fairly Short Stretch of Time. Phenomenological Prolegomena. *In* Feld, S. and Basso, K. H. (eds.) Senses of Place. Santa Fe, New Mexico: School of American Research Press, pp. 13-52.

**-Castleden, R. 1990.** The Knossos Labyrinth. A New View of the 'Palace of Minos' at Knossos. London and New York: Routledge.

**- Catell, M. G. and Climo, J. J. 2002.** Introduction: Meaning in Social Memory and History: Anthropological Perspectives. *In* Climo, J. J. and Catell, M. G. (eds.) Social Memory and History. Anthropological Perspectives. Walnut Creek and Oxford: Altamira Press. 1-36.

**-Ceccarelli, G. 1995.** Labirinti. *In* L' Europe et l' heritage culturel, Heraklion: Crete University Press, 45-66.

**-Chapman, M., McDonald, M. and Tonkin E. 1989.** Introduction - History and Social Anthropology. *In* Tonkin E., McDonald, M. and Chapman, M. (eds.) History and Ethnicity, London and New York: Routledge, 1-21.

**-Christinidis, N. 1997.** Archanes and the Revolution in 1897-98. (*I Arhanes stin epanastasi tou 1897-98*) Archanes: Municipality of Archanes. [In Greek]

**-Christinidis, N. and Bounakis, M. 1997 [1970].** Archanes throughout the Centuries. (*I Archanes dia mesou ton eonon*) Archanes: Municipality of Archanes.

**-Clifford, J. 1992.** Travelling Cultures. *In* Grossberg, L., Nelson, C. and Treichler, P. A. (eds) Cultural Studies. New York and London: Routledge, 96-116.

**-Clifford, J. 1997.** Routes. Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century. Cambridge (MA), London: Harvard University Press.

**-Clifford, J. and Marcus, G. (eds.) 1986.** Writing Culture: The Poetics and the Politics of Ethnography. Berkeley: University of California Press.

**-Climo, J. J. and Catell, M. G. (eds.) 2002.** Social Memory and History. Anthropological Perspectives. Walnut Creek and Oxford: Altamira Press.

**-Cohen, A. 1985.** The Symbolic Construction of Community. London: Tavistock.

**-Cohen, E. 1984.** The Sociology of Tourism: Approaches, Issues, and Findings. Annual Review of Sociology 10, 373-92.

**-Coleman, S. and Crang, M. (eds.) 2002.** Tourism. Between Place and Performance. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books.

**-Collard, A. 1989.** Investigating 'Social Memory' in a Greek Context. *In* Tonkin E., McDonald, M. and Chapman, M. (eds.) History and Ethnicity, London and New York: Routledge, 89-103.

- Comaroff, J. and Comaroff, J. 1992.** Ethnography and the Historical Imagination. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Connerton, P. 1989.** How Societies Remember. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cosgrove, D. 1989.** Geography is everywhere: Culture and Symbolism in Human Landscapes. *In* Gregory D. and Walford R. (eds.). Horizons in Human Geography (eds. London: MacMillan, 118-135.
- Cottrell, L. 1961.** The Bull of Minos. London (The Greek translation is used: "O Minotavros", Athens: Fexis, 1964).
- Cowan 1988.** Folk truth: When the Scholar Comes to Carnival in a "Traditional" Community. Journal of Modern Greek Studies, Vol. 6, no 2, 245-60.
- Cresswell, T. 1996.** In Place, Out of Place. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.
- Danforth, L. M. 1984.** The ideological context of the search for continuities in Greek culture. Journal of Modern Greek Studies 2, 53-85.
- Daniels, S. and Cosgrove, D. 1988.** Introduction: Iconography and Landscape. *In* D. Cosgrove and S. Daniels (eds.) The Iconography of the Landscape Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-10.
- Dann, G. 1996.** The People of Tourist Brochures. *In* Selwyn, T. (ed.) The Tourist Image. Myths and Myth making in Tourism. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 61-81.

- Darcque, P. 2003.** From the Treasure of Atraeus to the Palace of Menelaos. The Terror of Anonymity in Mycenaean Archaeology. (*Apo to thisavro tou Atrea sto Palati tou Menelaou. O tromos tis anonimias sti Mikinaiki Arheologia*) Arheologia ke Tehnes 86, 24-30. [In Greek]
- Deltsou, E. 2003.** Cultural heritage in the present and the future. Views and practices concerning a National past and a European future. (*I politismiki klironomia sto paron ke to mellon. Antilipsis ke praktikes enos ethnikou pereltontos ke enos evropiakou mellontos*) In The present of the Past. History, Folklore Studies and Social Anthropology. Athens: Etairia Spoudon Neoellinikou Politismou (Society for Modern Greek Studies), 209-231.
- De Boeck, F. 1998.** The Rootedness of Trees: Place as Cultural and Natural Texture in Rural Southwest Congo. In Lovell, N. (ed.) Locality and Belonging. London and New York: Routledge, 25-52.
- de Certeau, M. 1984.** The Practice of Everyday Life. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press.
- Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. 1988.** A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia. London: Athlone Press.
- Derrida, J. 1978 [1967].** Writing and Difference. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Diamantouros, N.-P., I. 1998 (1983).** Hellenism and Greekness. (*Ellinismos, Ellinikotitas*) In Tsaousis, D.G. (ed.) Greekness, Hellenism. (*Ellinismos, Ellinikotitas*) Athens: Hestia, 51-58. [In Greek]

**-Dias, N. 1994.** Looking at objects: memory, knowledge in nineteenth-century ethnographic displays. *In* Robertson, G., Mash, M., Tickner, L., Bird, J., Curtis, B., Putnam, T.(eds.) Traveller's Tales: Narratives of Home and Displacement. London and New York: Routledge, 164-176.

**-Dimitriou-Kotsoni, S. 1993.** The Aegean Cultural Tradition, Journal of Mediterranean Studies 3 (1), 62-76.

**-Doris, M. 1981.** Cretan People Won Their Cultural Battle. (*O kritikos laos kerdise tin politistiki tou mahi*). *In* Culture and Social Evolution (*Politismos ke kinoniki ekseliksi*). Athens: Gnosi, 300-304. [In Greek]

**-Douglas, M. 1966.** Purity and Danger. An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo. London and New York: Routledge.

**-Doundoulaki-Oustamanolaki, E. 1984.** Hard work and joy in the vineyards. (*Mohthi ke hares st'ambelia*) Archanes: Municipality of Archanes. [In Greek]

**-Doundoulaki-Oustamanolaki, E. 1996 [1984].** Stone Memories and Monuments. (*Petrines Mnimes ke Mnimia*) Archanes: Municipality of Archanes. [In Greek]

**-Dovey, K. 1985.** The quest for authenticity and the replication of environmental meaning. *In* Seamon, D. and Mugerauer, R. (eds.) Dwelling, Place and Environment: Towards a Phenomenology of Person and World. New York: Columbia University Press, 33-49.

**-Duncan, C. 1995.** Civilising Rituals. Inside public Art Museums. London and New York: Routledge.

**-Duncan, J. 1995.** Landscape Geography, 1993-94. *In* Progress in Human Geography, 19, pp. 414-22.

**-Eco, E. 1986.** Travels in Hyper-Reality. London: Picador.

**-Edensor, T. 2002.** National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life. Oxford and New York: Berg.

**-Edwards, J. 1998.** The Need for a 'Bit of History': Place and Past in English Identity. *In* Lovell, N. (ed.) Locality and Belonging. London and New York: Routledge, 147- 167.

**-Eisler, R. 1987.** The Chalice and the Blade. Our History, Our Future. San Francisco: Harper & Row.

**-Etienne, R. and Etienne, F. 1992 (1990).** The Search for Ancient Greece. London: Thames and Hudson.

**-Evans, A. J. 1884.** The Ashmolean Museum as a Home of Archaeology in Oxford. Oxford: Parker.

**-Evans, A. J. 1906.** Essai de Classification des Époques de la Civilisation Minoenne. London.

**-Evans, A. J. 1909.** Preface. *In* Hawes, C. H. and Hawes, H. B. Crete: The Forerunner of Greece. London and New York; Harper.

**-Evans, A. J. 1921-1936.** The Palace of Minos at Knossos. London: MacMillan.

- Evans, A. J. 1926.** Work of Reconstitution in the Palace of Knossos. Antiquaries Journal, vol. vii, no. 3, 258-267.
- Evans J. 1943.** Time and Chance: The Story of Arthur Evans and his Forebears. London.
- Fakidis, G. 1997.** Preparing the visitors' itinerary at the archaeological site of Knossos.(*Diamorfosi porias episkepton ston arheologiko horo tis Knossou*) Heraklion: Ktistor. [In Greek]
- Farnoux, A. 1996.** Knossos. Unearthing a Legend. New York: Thames and Hudson/New Horizons. (First edition in 1993 with the title "Archéologie d' un rêve").
- Farnoux, A. 2003.** Minoans and Mycenaeans in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. (*Minoites ke Mikineoi ston 20o eona*) Arheologia ke Tehnes 86, 36-41.
- Fees, C. 1996.** Tourism and the politics of authenticity in a North Cotswold town. In Selwyn, T. (ed.) The Tourist Image. Myths and Myth making in Tourism. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.
- Feld, S. and Basso, K. H. (eds.) 1996.** Senses of Place. Santa Fe, New Mexico: School of American Research Press.
- Fentress, J. and Wickham, C. 1992.** Social Memory: New Perspectives on the Past. Oxford: Blackwell.



**-Forty, A. 1999.** Introduction. *In* Forty, A. and Küchler, S. (eds.) The Art of Forgetting. Oxford and New York: Berg, 1-18.

**-Foster, R. J. 2002.** Materialising the Nation. Commodities, Consumption and Media in Papua New Guinea. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

**-Foucault, M. 1970.** The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences. London: Routledge.

**-Foucault, M. 1972.** The Archaeology of Knowledge. New York: Pantheon Books.

**-Foucault, M. 1977.** Language, Counter-Memory, Practice. Bouchard, D.F. (ed.) Ithaca-New York, 139-164.

**-Foucault, M. 1984.** The Foucault Reader. (Edited by Paul Rabinow) New York: Pantheon.

**-Foucault, M. 2000.** Different spaces. *In* J. Faubion (ed.) Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology (Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984, vol. 2). Harmondsworth: Penguin, 175-185.

**-Fragoudaki, A. 1997.** I politikes sinepies tis anistorikis parousiasis tou ellinikou ethnous. (*The political consequences of the a-historical presentation of the Greek nation*) *In* Fragoudaki, A. and Dragona, T. (eds.) What is our Country? Ethnocentrism in Education. (*Ti ine i Patrida mas? Ethnokentrismos stin Ekpedefsi*) Athens: Alexandria, 143-198. [In Greek]

- Fragoudaki, A. and Dragona, T. (eds.) 1997.** What is our Country? Ethnocentrism in Education. (*Ti ine i Patrida mas? Ethnokentrismos stin Ekpedefsi*) Athens: Alexandria, 143-198. [In Greek]
- Friedl, E. 1962.** Vassilika: A Village in modern Greece. New York: Holt, Rineheart, & Winston.
- Friedman, J. 1992.** The Past in the Future: History and the Politics of Identity. American Anthropologist 94 (4), 837-59.
- Friedman, J. 1994.** Cultural Identity and Global Process. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Galanaki, R. 2002.** The Century of Labyrinths. (*O Eonas ton Lavirinthon*). Athens: Kastaniotis.
- Geertz, C. 1973.** The Interpretation of Cultures. New York: Basic.
- Geertz, C. 1988.** Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Gefou-Madianou, D. 2003.** Conceptualisations of Self and “Other”: Issues of Identity in Modern Anthropological Theory. (*Eniologiseis tou eaftou ke tou allou: Zitimata taftotitas sti sighroni anthrpologiki theoria*) In Gefou-Madianou, D. (ed.) Self and “Other”. (*Eaftos ke Allos*) Athens: Gutenberg, 15-110.
- Gell, A. 1998.** Art and agency. An Anthropological Theory. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

**-Georgoudis, P. 2001.** The Minotaur of the unauthorised constructions eats Knossos. (O Minotavros ton afthereton troi tin Knosso), Eleftherotypia, 5-9-2001: 18-19.

**-Giddens, A. 1985.** The Nation-State and Violence. Volume Two of a Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism. Cambridge: Polity Press.

**-Giddens, A. 1990.** The Consequences of Modernity. Oxford: Polity Press.

**-Giddens, A. 1991.** Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age. Cambridge: Polity Press.

**-Giddens, A. 1994.** Living in a post-traditional society. *In* Beck, U., Giddens, A., Lash, S. Reflexive Modernization: Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order. Cambridge: Polity Press, 56-109.

**-Gimbutas, M. 1982.** Goddesses and Gods of Old Europe, 7000-3500 B.C. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press.

**-Gosden, C. and Marshall, Y. 1999.** The Cultural Biography of Objects. World Archaeology 31 (2), 169-178.

**-Graburn, N. 1977. [1989 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.]** Tourism: The Sacred Journey. *In* Smith, V. L. (ed.) Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 37-52.

**-Graham, B. Ashworth, G. J. and Tunbridge, J. E. 2000.** A Geography of Heritage. Power, Culture and Economy. London: Arnold.

- Hägg, R. and Marinatos, N. (eds.) 1987.** The Function of the Minoan Palaces. Proceedings of the Fourth International Symposium at the Swedish Institute in Athens, 10-16 June 1984. Acta Ath-4°, XXXXV. Stockholm: Paul Åström Förlag.
- Halbwachs, M. 1925.** Les Cadres Sociaux de la Mémoire. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.
- Halbwachs, M. 1950 [trans. 1992].** On Collective Memory. (ed. and trans. by Coser, L., A.). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Hall, S. 1997a (1990).** Cultural Identity and Diaspora. *In* Woodward, K. (ed.) Identity and Difference. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications and The Open University.
- Hall, S. 1997b.** The Work of Representation. *In* Hall, S. (ed.) Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications and The Open University, 13-74.
- Hall, S. 1997c.** Notes on Deconstructing 'the Popular'. *In* Storey, J. (ed.) Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: a Reader. Prentice Hall.
- Hall, S. 1999 (1993).** Culture, Community, Nation. *In* Boswell, D. and Evans J. (eds.) Representing the Nation: A Reader. Histories, Heritage and Museums. London and New York: Routledge in association with The Open University, 33-43.
- Hall, S. 2000.** Whose heritage? Third Text 49, 3-13.
- Hall, S., Held, D. and McGrew, A. (eds.) 1992.** Modernity and its Futures. Oxford: Polity Press and Blackwell.

**-Hamilakis, Y. (ed.) 2002a.** Labyrinth Revisited. Rethinking 'Minoan' Archaeology. Oxford: Oxbow Books.

**-Hamilakis, Y. 2002b.** Introduction. What Future for the 'Minoan' Past? Re-Thinking Minoan Archaeology. *In* Hamilakis, Y. (ed.) Labyrinth Revisited. Rethinking 'Minoan' Archaeology. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2-28.

**-Hamilakis, Y. 2006.** The Colonial, the National, and the Local: Legacies of the 'Minoan' Past. *In* Hamilakis, Y. and Momigliano, N. (eds.) Archaeology and European Modernity: Producing and Consuming the 'Minoans' (Creta Antica 7), 145-162.

**-Hamilakis, Y. and Momigliano, N. 2006.** Archaeology and European modernity: Stories from the borders. *In* Hamilakis, Y. and Momigliano, N. (eds.) Archaeology and European Modernity: Producing and Consuming the 'Minoans' (Creta Antica 7), 25-35.

**-Hamilakis, Y. and Yalouri, E. 1996.** Antiquities as Symbolic Capital in Modern Greek Society. Antiquity 70, 117-129.

**-Hamilakis, Y. and Yalouri, E. 2000.** Sacralising the Past: Cults of Archaeology in Modern Greece. Archaeological Dialogues 6 (2), 115-159.

**-Handler, R. 1988.** Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

**-Handler, R. and Linnekin, J. 1984.** Tradition, Genuine and Spurious. Journal of American Folklore 97, 274-290.

**-Harden, D. B. 1952.** Sir Arthur Evans Centenary Exhibition (4 October-3 November 1951). Oxford: Ashmolean Museum.

**-Hastrup, K. and Olwig, K. F. 1997.** Introduction. *In* Olwig, K. F. and Hastrup, K. (eds.) Siting Culture. London and New York: Routledge, 1-14.

**-Herzfeld, M. 1980.** Social tension and inheritance by lot in three Greek villages. Anthropological Quarterly 53, 91-100.

**-Herzfeld, M. 1982.** Ours Once More. Folklore, Ideology, and the Making of Modern Greece. Austin: University of Texas Press.

**-Herzfeld, M. 1983.** Interpreting kinship terminology: The problem of patriliney in rural Greece. Anthropological Quarterly 56, 157-166.

**-Herzfeld, M. 1985.** The Poetics of Manhood: Contest and Identity in a Cretan Mountain Village. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

**-Herzfeld, M. 1987.** Anthropology Through the Looking Glass: Critical Ethnography in the Margins of Europe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**-Herzfeld, M. 1991.** A Place in History: Social and Monumental Time in a Cretan Town. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

**-Herzfeld, M. 1992.** Metapatterns. Archaeology and the Uses of Evidential Scarcity. *In* Gardin, J.-C. and Peebles, C. S. (eds.) Representations in Archaeology. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 66-86.

**-Herzfeld, M. 1997.** Cultural Intimacy. Social Poetics in the Nation-State. New York, London: Routledge.

**-Herzfeld, M. 1998.** Social Poetics: Aspects of the Greek Ethnography. (*I kinoniki piitiki: ophis apo tin elliniki ethnografia*). In Gefou-Madianou, D. (ed.) Anthropological Theory and Ethnography. (*Anthropologiki theoria ke ethnografia*). Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 477-518. [In Greek]

**-Herzfeld, M. 1998 [1992].** The Rhetoric of Numbers. (*I Ritoriki ton Arithmon. Sinteknia ke Kinoniki Ipostasi stin Orini Kriti.*) In Papataxiarchis, E. and Paradellis, Th. (eds.) Identities and Gender in Modern Greece. (*Taftotites ke Filo stin Sighroni Ellada*). Athens: Alexandria, 345-371. [In Greek]

**-Herzfeld, M. 2001.** Towards an Ethnographic Phenomenology of the Greek Spirit. In Revel, J. and Levi G. (eds.) Political Uses of the Past. The Recent Mediterranean Experience. Mediterranean Historical Review, Vol. 16, no 1, 13-26.

**-Herzfeld, M. 2003.** Localism and the Logic of Nationalistic Folklore: Cretan Reflections. Comparative Studies in Society and History 45, no. 2, 281-310.

**-Herzfeld, M. 2006.** Spatial Cleansing: Monumental Vacuity and the Idea of the West. Journal of Material Culture Vol. 11 (1/2): 127–149.

**-Hirsch, E. 1995.** Introduction. Landscape: Between Place and Space. In Hirsch, E. and O'Hanlon, M. (eds.) The Anthropology of Landscape. Perspectives on Place and Space. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1-30.

**-Hirsch, E. and O'Hanlon, M. (eds.) 1995.** The Anthropology of Landscape. Perspectives on Place and Space. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

**-Hitchcock, L. A. 1999.** Postcards from the Edge: Towards a Self-Reflexive Reconstruction of Knossos. Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology 12. 1, 128-133.

**-Hitchcock, L. and Koudounaris, P. 2002.** Virtual Discourse: Arthur Evans and the Reconstructions at Knossos. In Hamilakis, Y. (ed.) Labyrinth Revisited. Rethinking 'Minoan' Archaeology. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 40-58.

**-Hobsbawm, E. and Ranger, T. (eds.). 1983.** The Invention of Tradition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**-Hodder, I. 1998.** The past as Passion and Play: Catalhoyuk as a Site of Conflict in the construction of multiple pasts. In Meskell, L. (ed.) Archaeology Under Fire. Nationalism, Politics and Heritage in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East. London and New York: Routledge.

**-Hood, S. 1987.** An Early British Interest in Knossos. BSA 82, 85-94.

**-Hood, S. and Taylor, W. 1981.** The Bronze Age Palace at Knossos. Plan and Sections. BSA Suppl. 13. The British School at Athens and Thames and Hudson.

**-Hopkins, A. 1979.** Crete: its Past, Present and People. London: Faber.

**-Horne, D. 1984.** The Great Museum: the Re-presentation of History. London and Sydney: Pluto.



- Horwitz, S. L. 1981.** The Find of a Lifetime: Sir Arthur Evans and the Discovery of Knossos. New York: The Viking Press and London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
- Hoskins, J. 1998.** Biographical Objects. London: Routledge.
- Hourdakis, A. 1995.** The Cretan Labyrinth and its Pedagogic Interpretation. (*O kritikos lavirinthos kai i pedagogiki tou erminia - Le Labyrinthe Crétois et sa signification pédagogique*). In L' Europe et l' heritage culturel, Heraklion: Crete University Press, 17-30. [In Greek and French]
- Howell 1976.** Knossos. The Future? Acts of the Fourth Cretological Congress. Vol. A1, 243-247.
- Ingold, T. 1993.** The temporality of landscape. World Archaeology, 25 (2), 152-74.
- Ingold, T. 1996.** Key Debates in Anthropology. London and New York: Routledge
- James. S. 1997.** Drawing inferences: visual reconstructions in theory and practice. In Molyneaux, B. L. (ed.). The Cultural Life of Images: Visual Representation in Archaeology. London and New York: Routledge, 22-46.
- Just, R. 1989.** Triumph of the Ethnos. In Tonkin E., McDonald, M. and Chapman, M. (eds.) History and Ethnicity, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 71-88
- Just, R. 1995.** Cultural Certainties, Private Doubts. In W. James (ed.) The Pursuit of Certainty. Religious and Cultural Formulations. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 285-308.

**-Just, R. 1998.** The limits of kinship. Kinship and gender in an Ionian island. *In* Papataxiarchis, E. and Paradelis, Th. (eds.) Identity and Gender in Modern Greece. (*Taftotites ke filo sti sikhroni Ellada*), Athens: Alexandria, 313-343. [In Greek]

**-Kahn, M. 1996.** Your Place and Mine: Sharing Emotional Landscapes in Wamira, Papua New Guinea. *In* Feld, S. and Basso, K. H. (eds.) Senses of Place. Santa Fe, New Mexico: School of American Research Press, 167-196.

**-Kakaboura R. 1999.** In Between the Urban Centre and the Local Societies: Migrant Associations from the Konitsa Region in Athens. (*Anamesa sto Astiko Kentro ke tis Topikes Kinonies: Sillogi Apodimon Eparhias Konitsas stin Athina*) Konitsa: Municipality of Konitsa. [In Greek]

**-Kakaboura R. 2006.** Folklore archives and national identity: a relationship of interaction (*Laografika arhia ke ethniki taftotita: mia shesi alilepidrasis*) Kritiki Diepistimonikotita 2, 108-135. [In Greek]

**-Kalpaxis, Th. 1997.** The Tyranny of the Ancient Greek Grandeur. (*I tirania tou arheoellinikou megalion*) *In* 'The Review of Art' A Critical Decade. (*Epitheorisi Tehnis. Mia Krisimi Dekaetia.*) Athens: Eteria Spoudon Sholis Moraiti, 201-207. [In Greek]

**-Kaplan, F. E. S. (ed.) 1994.** Introduction. *In* Museums and the Making of "Ourselves". The Role of Objects in National Identity. London and New York: Leicester University Press, 1-15.

**-Karp, I. and Lavine, S. D. (eds.) 1991.** Exhibiting cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.

**-Karp, I, Kraemer, C.M. and Lavine, S. D. (eds.) 1992.** Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture. Washington : Smithsonian Institution.

**-Kazantzakis, N. 1965.** Report to Greco. (Trans. by P. A. Bien) Bantam Books: New York.

**-Keane, W. 2003.** Self-Interpretation, Agency, and the Objects of Anthropology: Reflections on a Genealogy. Comparative Studies in Society and History, 45 (2), 222-248.

**-Kenna, M. 1976.** The Idiom of the family. In Peristiany, J. G. (ed.) Mediterranean Family Structures. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 347-362.

**-Kenna, M. 2003.** The regeneration and the rediscovery of tradition. An example from the Cyclades, (*H anagenisi ke i ek neou anakalipsi tis paradosis. Ena paradigma apo tis Kiklades*) The present of the past. History, Folklore Studies and Social Anthropology. Athens: Etairia Spoudon Neoellinikou Politismou (Society for Modern Greek Studies), 361-367. [In Greek]

**-Klynne, A. 1998.** Reconstructions of Knossos: Artists' Impressions, Archaeological Evidence and Wishful Thinking. Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology 11. 2, 206-229.

**-Kofou, A. 1989.** Crete. All Museums and Archaeological Sites. (*Kriti: Ola ta Mouseia kai oi arheologiki hori*) Athens: Ekdotiki Athinon. [In Greek also in English and other languages]

**-Kopaka, K. 1990.** Minos Kalokairinos, Excavations at Knossos. (*Minoos Kalokairinou, Anaskafes stin Knoso*) Palimpseston 9-10. Heraklion: Vikelaia Library. [In Greek]

**-Kopaka, K. 1995.** Minos Kalokairinos and the first excavations at Knossos (*O Minos Kalokairinos ke i protes anaskafes stin Knosso*.) Proceedings of the 7<sup>th</sup> Cretological Congress (Rethymnon), 501-511. [In Greek]

**-Kopytoff, I. 1986.** The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process. In Appadurai, A. 1986 (ed.) The Social Life of Things. Commodities in Cultural Perspective. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 64-91.

**-Kotsakis, K. 1998.** The past is ours. In Meskell, L. (ed.) Archaeology Under Fire. Nationalism, Politics and Heritage in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. London: Routledge, 44-67.

**-Küchler, S. 1987.** Malangan: Art and Memory in a Melanesian Society. Man (N.S.) 22, 238-255.

**-Küchler, S. 1993.** Landscape as Memory: The Mapping of Process and its Representation in a Melanesian Society. In Bender, B. (ed.) Landscape. Politics and Perspectives. Providence and Oxford: Berg, pp. 85-106.

**-Küchler, S. 1999.** The Place of Memory. In Forty, A. and Küchler, S. (eds.) The Art of Forgetting. Oxford and New York: Berg, 53-72.

**-Kyriakidou-Nestoros, A. 1978.** Theory in Greek Folklore Studies. (*I Theoria tis Ellinikis Laografias*) Athens: Society for the Study of Modern Greek Culture and General Education. [In Greek]

- Kyriakidou-Nestoros, A. 1998 (1983).** Folk tradition: Symbol and Reality. (*Laiki Paradosi: Simvolo ke pragmatikotita*) In Tsaousis, D.G. (ed.) Greekness, Hellenism. (*Ellinikotita, Ellinismos*) Athens: Hestia, 249-256. [In Greek]
- **Lapatin, K. 2002.** Mysteries of the Snake Goddess. Art, Desire and the Forging of History. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Lash, S. 1990.** Sociology of Postmodernism. London and New York: Routledge.
- Lash, S. and Friedman, J. (eds.) 1992.** Modernity and Identity. Oxford (UK) and Cambridge (USA): Blackwell.
- Lash, S. and Urry, J. 1994.** Economies of Signs and Spaces. London: Sage.
- Layton, R. Thomas, J. and Stone, P. 2001.** The Destruction and Conservation of Cultural Heritage. London and New York: Routledge.
- Leigh Fermor, P. 1966.** Roumeli: Travels in Northern Greece. New York: Harper and Row.
- Lekatsas, P. 2001 [1964].** Labyrinth and the Labyrinth Ritual. (O lavirinthos ke i lavirintiki ierourgia). In Papageorgiou, A. (ed.) Crete. (Special Volume of the Review "EOS"). Athens: Papadimas, 47-54. [In Greek]
- Leontis, A. 1995.** Topographies of Hellenism: Mapping the Homeland. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

**-Levitt, M. 1980.** The Cretan Glance: The World and Art of Nikos Kazantzakis. Columbus: Ohio State University Press.

**-Leslie, E. 1999.** Souvenirs and Forgetting: Walter Benjamin's Memory-work. *In* Kwint, M., Breward, C. and Aynsley, J. (eds.) Material memories. Design and Evocation. Oxford and New York: Berg, 107-122.

**-Lévi-Strauss, C. 1968.** History and Anthropology. *In* Structural Anthropology, Volume 1. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1-27.

**-Lidchi, H. 1997.** The Poetics and the Politics of Exhibiting Other Cultures. *In* Hall, S. (ed.) Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications and The Open University, 151-222.

**-Logiadou-Platonos, S. and Marinatou, N. 1986.** Crete (Kriti). Athens: Mathioulakis [In Greek, also in English and other languages]

**-Loizidi, N. 1988.** The Myth of the Minotaur in the Interwar Avant-garde. (*O mithos tou Minotavrou stin protoporia tou Mesopoleμου*) Athens: Nefeli.

**-Lovell, N. 1998.** Introduction: Belonging in Need of Emplacement? *In* Lovell, N. (ed.) Locality and Belonging. London and New York: Routledge, 1-24.

**-Lowenthal, D. 1985.** The Past is a Foreign Country. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**-Lowenthal, D. 1998.** The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Lury, C. 1997.** The Objects of Travel. *In* Rojek, C. and Urry, J. (eds.) Touring Cultures. Transformations of Travel and Theory. London and New York: Routledge, 75-95.
- Lyotard, J.-F. 1993.** *Moralités postmodernes*. Paris: Galilée.
- MacCannell, D. 1976.** The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class. New York: Schocken Books.
- MacCannell, D. 1992.** Empty Meeting Grounds: The Tourist Papers. London and New York: Routledge.
- Macdonald, S. 1997a.** Reimagining Culture. Histories, Identities and the Gaelic Renaissance. Oxford and New York: Berg.
- Macdonald, S. 1997b.** A People's Story: Heritage, Identity and Authenticity. *In* Rojek, C. and Urry, J. (eds.) Touring Cultures. Transformations of Travel and Theory. London and New York: Routledge, 155-175.
- Macdonald S. 1997c.** The museum as mirror. Ethnographic reflections. *In* James, A., Hockey, J. and Dawson, A. (eds.) After Writing Culture: Epistemology and Praxis in Contemporary Anthropology. London and New York: Routledge, 163-176.
- Macdonald S. (ed.) 1998.** The Politics of Display: Museums, Science, Culture. London and New York: Routledge.
- Macdonald, S. and Fyfe, G. (eds.) 1996.** Theorizing Museums. Oxford and Cambridge (MA): Blackwell.

**-MacEnroe, J. 1994.** Sir Arthur Evans and Edwardian archaeology. Classical Bulletin 71, 3-18.

**-MacEnroe, J. 2002.** Cretan Questions: Politics and Archaeology 1898-1913. *In* Hamilakis, Y. (ed.) Labyrinth Revisited. Rethinking 'Minoan' Archaeology. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 59-72.

**-MacGillivray, J. A. 2000.** Minotaur: Sir Arthur Evans and the Archaeology of the Minoan Myth. London: Jonathan Cape.

**-af Malmberg, M. and Stråth, B. (eds.) 2002.** The Meaning of Europe. Oxford and New York: Berg.

**-Massey, D. 1995a.** The conceptualisation of place. *In* Massey, D. and Jess, P. (eds.) A Place in the world? Places, Cultures and Globalization. Oxford and Milton Keynes: Oxford University Press and The Open University, 45-85.

**-Massey, D. 1995b.** Imagining the World. *In* Allen, J. and Massey, D. (eds.) Geographical Worlds. Oxford and Milton Keynes: Oxford University Press and The Open University, 5-42.

**-Mavrayianni, M. 1999.** Objects of the Past or Material Memory: The Consumption of Otherness. (*Antikimena tou parelthontos i iliki mninmi: I katanalosi mias eterotitas*). *In* Benveniste, R. and Paradellis, Th. (eds.) Routes and Places of Memory. Historical and Anthropological Approaches. (*Diadromes ke topi tis mnimis. Istorikes ke anthropologikes prosegis*). Athens: Alexandria, 175-192. [In Greek]



- McNeal, R. A. 1974.** The legacy of Arthur Evans. California Studies in Classical Antiquity 6, 205-220.
- Meethan, K. 2001.** Tourism in Global Society. Place, Culture, Consumption. New York: Palgrave.
- Meskell, L. 1998.** Archaeology matters. *In* Meskell, L. (ed.) Archaeology Under Fire. Nationalism, Politics and Heritage in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. London: Routledge, 1-12.
- Michailidou, A. 2002.** Knossos: A Complete Guide to the Palace of Minos. Athens: Ekdotiki Athinon. [In Greek and other languages]
- Mieke, B., Crewe, J. and Spitzer, L. (eds.) 1998.** Acts of Memory. Cultural Recall in the Present. Hanover, London: Dartmouth College Press/University Press of New England.
- Miller, D. 1987.** Material Culture and Mass Consumption. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Miller, D. and Tilley, C. 1996.** Editorial. Journal of Material Culture 1 (1), 5-14.
- Miller, H. 1941.** The Colossus of Maroussi. San Francisco: Colt Press.
- Milopotamitaki, K. 1998.** Heraklion in the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (*To Iraklio stin teleftea dekaetia tou dekatou enatou eona*). Haniotika Nea (10-2-1998, insert), 14-17. [In Greek]

**-Molyneaux, B. L. (ed.) 1997.** The Cultural Life of Images: Visual Representation in Archaeology. London and New York: Routledge.

**-Molyneaux, B. L. 1999.** Fighting with Pictures: The Archaeology of Reconstructions. Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology 11. 2, 134-136.

**-Momigliano, N. 1999.** Duncan Mackenzie: A Cautious Canny Highlander and the Palace of Minos at Knossos. London: Institute of Classical Studies.

**-Momigliano, N. 2006.** Sir Arthur Evans, Greek Myths and the Minoans. *In* Darque P., Fotiadis M. and Polychronopoulou O. (eds) “Mythos”, La Préhistoire Égéeenne du XIX<sup>e</sup> au XXI<sup>e</sup> Siècle après J.-C. Table Ronde Internationale, Athènes, 21-23 Novembre 2002. Paris: Ecole Française (Bulletin de Correspondence Hellénique, suppl. 46), 73-80.

**-Morgan, V. 1999.** The Construction of Civic Memory in Early Modern Norwich. *In* Kwint, M., Breward, C. and Aynsley, J. (eds.) Material memories. Design and Evocation. Oxford and New York: Berg, 183-197.

**-Morris, C.** From Ideologies of Motherhood to ‘Collecting Mother Goddesses’. *In* Hamilakis, Y. and Momigliano, N. (eds.) Archaeology and European Modernity: Producing and consuming the ‘Minoans’ (Creta Antica 7), 69-78.

**-Morris, I. 1994.** Archaeologies of Greece. *In* Morris, I. (ed.) Classical Greece: Ancient Histories and Modern Archaeologies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 3-47.

**-Moser, M. 1997.** Museums and the Construction of an Identity for Archaeology: Dioramas and the Presentation of Early Prehistoric Life. *In* Denford, G.T. (ed.)

Representing Archaeology in Museums. Society of Museum Archaeologists, The Museum Archaeologist, Volume 22, Conference Proceedings London 1995, 83-85.

**-Mouliou, M. 1996.** Ancient Greece, its classical heritage and the modern Greeks: aspects of nationalism in museum exhibitions. *In* Atkinson, J. A., Banks, I. and O'Sullivan, J. (eds.) Nationalism and Archaeology. Glasgow: Cruithne Press, 174-199.

**-Nash, D. 1989.** Tourism as a Form of Imperialism. *In* Smith, V.L. (ed.) Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 37-52.

**-Nelson, R., S and Olin, M. (eds.) 2003.** Monuments and Memory, Made and Unmade. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

**-Nora, P. 1998.** General Introduction: Between Memory and History. *In* Nora, P. and Kritzman, L.D. (eds.) Realms of Memory: the Construction of the French Past. New York: Columbia University Press, 1-20.

**-O'Hanlon, M. 1993.** Paradise: Portraying the New Guinea Highlands. London: British Museum Press.

**-Odermatt P. 1996.** A Case of Neglect? The Politics of (Re)presentation: A Sardinian Case. *In* Boissevain, J. (ed.) Coping With Tourists. European Reactions to Mass Tourism. Providence-Oxford: Berghahn Books, 84-111.

**-Olick, J. and Robbins, J. 1998.** Social Memory Studies: From "Collective Memory" to the Historical Sociological of Mnemonic Practices. Annual Review of Sociology 24, 105-14.

**-Palmer, C. 1998.** From Theory to Practice. Experiencing the Nation in Everyday Life. Journal of Material Culture 3 (2), 175-199.

**-Palyvou, K. 1997.** The Visitors' Itinerary. (*I Poria ton Episkepton*) In "Knossos", Insert "Epta Imeres" in the Newspaper Kathimerini (20/4/1997), 23-25.

**-Panayiotakis, G. 2003.** The Cretan Woman, Yesterday and Today. (*I gineka tis Kritis sto xthes ke sto simera*). Heraklion: Kriti. [In Greek]

**-Papadopoulos, J. K. 1997.** Knossos. In de la Torre, M. (ed.) The Conservation of Archaeological Sites in the Mediterranean Region. (An International Conference Organized by the Getty Conservation Institute and J.Paul Getty Museum [(6-12 May1995)]). Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 93-125.

**-Papadopoulos, J. K. 2005.** Inventing the Minoans: archaeology, modernity and the quest for European identity. Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology, 18 (1), 87-149.

**-Papageorgiou, A. (ed.) 2001 [1964].** Crete. (Special Volume of the Review "EOS"). Athens: Papadimas.

**-Papataxiarchis, E. 1993.** The Past in the Present. Anthropology, History and the Study of Modern Greek Society (*To parelthon sto paron. Anthropologia, istoria ke I meleti tis neoellinikis kinonias*). In Papataxiarchis, E. and Paradellis, Th. (eds.) Anthropology and the Past. Contributions to the Social History of Modern Greece. (*Anthropologia ke parelthon. Simvoles stin kinoniki istoria tis neoteris Elladas*) Athens: Alexandria, 13-74. [In Greek]

**-Paradellis, Th. 1999.** The Anthropology of Memory. (*Anthropologia tis mnimis*). In Benveniste, R. and Paradellis, Th. (eds.) Routes and Places of Memory. Historical and Anthropological Approaches. (*Diadromes ke topi tis mnimis. Istorikes ke anthropologikes prosegeisis*). Athens: Alexandria, 27-58. [In Greek]

**-Parkin, D. 1998,** Forward. In Lovell, N. (ed.) Locality and Belonging. London and New York: Routledge, ix-xiv.

**-Parmentier, R. 1987.** The Sacred Remains: Myth, History and Polity in Belau. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

**-Pearce, S. M. (ed.) 1989.** Museum Studies in Material Culture. Leicester: Leicester University Press.

**-Platon, N. 2001 [1964].** On the character of Minoan Culture. (*Giro sto haraktira tou minoikou politismou*). In Papageorgiou, A. (ed.) Crete. (Special Volume of the Review "EOS"). Athens: Papadimas, 36-45. [In Greek]

**-Politis, A. 1993.** Romantic Years: Ideologies and Mentalities in Greece, 1830-1880. (*Romantika Hronia: Ideologies ke Nootropies stin Ellada tou 1830-1880*) Athens: Mnemon, Society for the Study of Modern Hellenism. [In Greek]

**-Pomian, K. 1990.** Collectors and Curiosities: Paris and Venice, 1500-1800. Cambridge: Polity Press.

**-Poulianos, A. 1971.** The Origins of the Cretans. (*I katagogi ton Kriton*). Athens: Anthropological Society.

**-Rackham, O. and Moody, J. 1996.** The Making of the Cretan Landscape. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.

**-Rajan, B. 1985.** The Form of the Unfinished. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

**-Rapport and Dawson 1998.** Home and Movement: A Polemic. *In* Rapport, N. and Dawson, A. (eds.) Migrants of Identity. Perceptions of Home in a World of Movement. Oxford and New York: Berg, 19-38.

**-Ritzer, G. and Liska, A. 1997.** 'McDisneyisation' and 'Post-Tourism'. Complementary perspectives on contemporary tourism. *In* Rojek, C. and Urry, J. (eds.) Touring Cultures. Transformations of Travel and Theory. London and New York: Routledge, 96-109.

**-Rojek, C. 1997.** Indexing, Dragging and the Social Construction of Tourist Sights. *In* Rojek, C. and Urry, J. (eds.) Touring Cultures. Transformations of Travel and Theory. London and New York: Routledge, 52-74.

**-Rojek, C. and Urry, J. 1997.** Transformations of Travel and Theory. *In* Rojek, C. and Urry, J. (eds.) Touring Cultures. Transformations of Travel and Theory. London and New York: Routledge, 1-19.

**-Rose, G. 1995.** Place and Identity: A Sense of Place. *In* Massey, D. and Jess, P. (eds.) A Place in the world? Places, Cultures and Globalization. Oxford and Milton Keynes: Oxford University Press and The Open University, 87-132.

**-Rowlands, M. 1993.** The Role of Memory in the Transmission of Culture, World Archaeology 25, no 2, 141-151.

- Rowlands, M. 1994.** The politics of identity in archaeology. *In* Bond, G., T. and Gilliam, A. (eds.) Social Construction of the Past. Representation as Power. London and New York: Routledge, 129-143.
- Rowlands, M. 2002.** Heritage and Cultural Property. *In* Buchli, V. (ed.) The Material Culture Reader. Oxford and New York: Berg, 105-114.
- Rutherford, J. 1990.** A Place Called Home: Identity and the Cultural Politics of Difference. *In* Rutherford, J. (ed.) Identity: Community, Culture, Difference. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 9-27.
- Sahlins, M. 1981.** Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.
- Sahlins, M. 1985.** Islands of History. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Said, E. 1978.** Orientalism. New York; Pantheon.
- Sakellarakis, Y. 1998.** Archaeological Preoccupations in Crete in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. (*Arheologikes agonies stin Kriti tou 19ou eona*). Heraklion and Athens: Crete University Press. [In Greek]
- Sakellarakis, Y. 2000.** The Broader Area of Heraklion in Prehistoric Times. (*I Evriteri Periohi tou Irakliou stin Proistoriki Epohi*) *In* Ariadne's Thread (*O Mitos tis Ariadnis*) Heraklion, 19-31. [In Greek]
- Sakellarakis, Y. 2003.** The Poetics of an Excavation. (*I Piitiki tis Anaskafis*) Ayhens: Ikaros. [In Greek]

- Sakellarakis, Y. and Sakellarakis, E. 1997.** Archanes: Minoan Crete in a New Light. Athens: Ammos.
- Sakellarakis, Y. and Sakellarakis, E. 2002.** Crete: Archanes. (*Kriti: Archanes*) Athens: Ekdotiki: Athinon. [In Greek, also in English and other languages]
- Samuel, R. 1994.** Theatres of Memory. Volume 1: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture. London and New York: Verso.
- Samuel, R. and Thompson, P. (eds.) 1990.** The Myths We Live By. London and New York: Routledge.
- Saulnier, F. 1980.** Anoya, Un village de Montagne Cretois. Paris: P. H. Stahl / Laboratoire d'anthropologie Sociale.
- Scott, J. 1990.** Domination and the Arts of Resistance. Hidden Transcripts. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Selwyn, T. 1996a.** Introduction. In Selwyn, T. (ed.) The Tourist Image. Myths and Myth making in Tourism. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1-32.
- Selwyn, T. (ed.) 1996b.** The Tourist Image. Myths and Myth making in Tourism. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.
- Seremetakis, N. 1996.** The Senses Still: Perception and Memory as Material Culture in Modernity. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.



- Shankland, D. 1996.** The Anthropology of an Archaeological Presence. *In* Hodder, I. (ed.) On the Surface: The Re-opening of Çatalhöyük. Cambridge: MacDonald Institute, 349-357.
- Shanks, M. 1996.** Classical Archaeology of Greece. Experiences of the discipline. London and New York: Routledge.
- Shanks, M. and Tilley, C. 1992 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.).** Re-Constructing Archaeology. Theory and Practice. London and New York: Routledge.
- Sherratt, S. 2000.** Arthur Evans, Knossos and the Priest-King. Oxford: Ashmolean Museum.
- Simandiraki, A. 2006.** The 'Minoan' experience of schoolchildren in Crete. *In* Hamilakis, Y. and Momigliano, N. (eds.) Archaeology and European Modernity: Producing and consuming the 'Minoans' (Creta Antica 7), 259-274.
- Skopetea, E. 1988.** The Model Kingdom and the Great Idea: Aspects of the National Problem in Greece (1830-1880). Athens: Polytypo.
- Smith V.L. (ed.) 1989.** Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Soja, E. W. 1989.** Postmodern Geographies: The reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory. London: Verso.
- Solomon, E. 1998.** Mountain Space and Archaeology. A Reconsideration of Current Approaches to the Epirote Prehistory. Paper presented at the International Congress The Balkan Mountain Space, Konitsa (Greece), 29-31 May 1998.

- Solomon, E. 2003. Constructing local identity through archaeological finds: the case of Knossos (Crete, Greece). Museological Review, Special Issue 10, 31-47.
- Solomon, E. 2005. Archaeological monuments as landscapes: anthropological approaches to a geographical concept. (*To aheologiko mnimiio os topio: anthropologikes prosegiseis mias geografikis enias*) Kritiki Diepistemonikotita, vol. 1, 74-97. [In Greek]
- Starr, C. G. 1955. The Myth of the Minoan Thalassocracy. Historia 3, 282-291.
- Starr, C. G. 1984. Minoan Flower Lovers. In Hägg, R. and Marinatos, N. (eds.) The Minoan Thalassocracy. Myth and Reality. Proceedings of the Third International Symposium at the Swedish Institute in Athens, 10-16 June 1984. Acta Ath-4°, XXXII. Stockholm, 9-12.
- Stewart, C. 1994. Syncretism and a Dimension of Nationalist Discourse in Modern Greece. In Stewart, C. and Shaw, R. (eds.) Syncretism/Anti-Syncretism: The Politics of Religious Synthesis. London and New York: Routledge, 127-143.
- Stavridis, S. 1990. The Symbolic Relation to Space: How Social Values Formulate and Interpret Space. (*I simboliki shesi me to horo. Pos I kinokikes aksies diamorfonoun kai erminevoun to horo.*) Athens: Kalvos. [In Greek]
- Stolcke, V. 1995. Talking Culture: New Boundaries, New rhetorics of Exclusion in Europe. Current Anthropology 36, 1-26.
- Sutton, D. E. 1998. Memories Cast in Stone. The Relevance of the Past in Everyday Life. Oxford and New York: Berg.

- Syrmakezis, K. et al. 1992.** A research study for the upgrading of the central part of the settlement of Archanes, Crete. (*Erevna-meleti anadiksis ke anavathmisis tou sinektikou tmimatos tou ikismou Arhanon Kritis*) In The Architectural Identity of Archanes. Acts of the Conference held in Archanes (8-12-1992). Archanes: Municipality of Archanes and other institutions, 37-82.
  
- Tahataki, E. (n.d.)** On Minoan Crete. A Journey in Space and Time. Athens: Smirniotakis.
  
- Tahataki, E. 1996.** Archanes: A Retrospection in Time. Archanes: Municipality of Archanes.
  
- Thomas, N. 1992** Substantivisation and the Anthropological Discourse. The Transformation of Practices into Institutions in Neotraditional Pacific Societies. In Carrier, J. G. (ed.) History and Tradition in Melanesian Anthropology. Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford: University of California Press, 64-85.
  
- Thompson, E. P. 1978.** The Voice of the Past: Oral History. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
  
- Tilley, C. 1993.** Art, Architecture, Landscape [Neolithic Sweden]. In Bender, B. (ed.) Landscape. Politics and Perspectives. Providence and Oxford: Berg, 49-84.
  
- Tilley, C. 1994.** A Phenomenology of Landscape. Places, Paths and Monuments. Oxford/ Providence, USA: Berg Publishers.
  
- Tilley, C. 1999.** Metaphor and Material Culture. Oxford: Blackwell.

**-Tilley, C. 2001.** Ethnography and material culture. *In* Atkinson, P., Coffey, A., Delamont, S., Lofland, J. and Lofland, L. (eds.) The Sage Handbook of Ethnography. London: Sage Publishers, 258-272.

**-Tilley, C. 2002.** Metaphor, Materiality and Interpretation. *In* Buchli, V. (ed.) The Material Culture Reader. Oxford and New York: Berg, 23-26.

**-Tilley, C. 2004.** The Materiality of Stone. (With the assistance of W. Bennett) Oxford and New York: Berg.

**-Tilley, C. 2006.** Introduction: Identity, Place, Landscape and Heritage. Journal of Material Culture, Vol. 11(1/2): 7–32.

**-Tilly 1994** Afterwords: Political memories in space and time. *In* Boyarin, J. (ed.) Remapping Memory: The Politics of TimeSpace. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 241-256

**-Tonkin E., McDonald, M. and Chapman, M. (eds.) 1989.** History and Ethnicity, London and New York: Routledge.

**-Tonkin, E. 1990.** History and the myth of realism. *In* Samuel, R. and Thompson, P. (eds.) The Myths We Live By. London and New York: Routledge, 25-35.

**-Tonkin, E. 1992.** Narrating Our Pasts. The Social Construction of Oral History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**-Toren, C. 1988.** Making the present, revealing the past: The mutability and continuity of tradition as process. Man 23, 696-717.

**-Travlou, P. 2002.** Go Athens: A Journey to the Centre of the City. *In* Coleman, S. and Crang, M. (eds.) Tourism. Between Place and Performance. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 108-127.

**-Treuil, R. 2003.** Minoan Crete. A lost Paradise? (*Minoiki Kriti. Enas Hamenos Paradisos?*) Archaeologia ke Technes 86: 31-35. [In Greek]

**-Tsantiropoulos, A. 2004.** Vendettas in Modern Mountainous Central Crete. (*I vendeta sti sighroni orini kentrikh Kriti*) Athens: Plethron. [In Greek]

**-Tsaousis, D.G. 1998 (1983).** Greekness, Hellenism. The problem of Greek Identity. (*Ellinikotita, Ellinismos. To provlima tis ellinikis taftotitas*) *In* Tsaousis, D.G. (ed.) Greekness, Hellenism. (*Ellinikotita, Ellinismos*) Athens: Hestia, 15-25. [In Greek]

**-Tsartas, P. 1996.** Tourists, Travelling, Places. Sociological Approaches to Tourism. (*Touristes, Taxidia, Topi. Kinoniologikes Prosegissis ston Tourismo*). Athens: Eksantas. [In Greek]

**-Tsoukalas, K. 1998 (1983).** Tradition and Modernity: Some General Questions. *In* Tsaousis, D.G. (ed.) Greekness, Hellenism. (*Ellinikotita, Ellinismos*) Athens: Hestia, 37-48. [In Greek]

**-Tsoukalas, K. 1999.** Power as People and as Nation. Adventures of Meanings. (*I Eksousia os Laos ke os Ethnos. Peripeties Simasion*) Athens: Themelio. [In Greek]

**-Tziovas, D. 1989.** The Metamorphoses of Nationism and the Ideological Construction of Greekness in the Interwar Period. (*I Metamorfosis tou Ethnismou ke to Ideologima tis Ellinikotitas sto Mesopolemo*) Athens: Odisseas. [In Greek]

**-Tzombanaki, H. 1992.** Neoclassicist influences on buildings in urban and semi-urban centres of Crete. The case of the Archanes settlement, Heraklion area. (*Neoklassikes epidrasis sta ktismata ton astikon ke imiastikon kentron tis Kritis*) In The Architectural Identity of Archanes. Acts of the Conference held in Archanes (8-12-1992). Archanes: Municipality of Archanes and other institutions, 17-30. [In Greek]

**-Tzombanaki, H. 2002.** Archanes and its Architecture. (*I Archanes ke i Architektoniki tous*). Heraklion: Tzombanaki Editions. [In Greek]

**-Urry, J. 1990.** The Tourist Gaze. Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies. London-Newbury Park-New Delhi: Sage Publications.

**-Urry, J. 1995.** Consuming places. London and New York: Routledge.

**-Van Steen, G. 2002.** Greek Worlds, Ancient and Modern: To Whom They May (or May Not) Concern. Journal of Modern Greek Studies, Vol. 20, 175-190.

**-Vardakis, V. 2004.** Greek agriculture is collapsing (*I elliniki georgia se dialisi*) Newspaper Patris, 3-8-2004, ([www.patris.gr](http://www.patris.gr)). [In Greek]

**-Vassilakis, A. 2001.** Minoan Crete: From Myth to History. Athens: Adam Editions. [In Greek also in English and other languages]

**-Williams, R. 1973.** The Country and the City. London: Chatto & Windus.

**-Wood, M. 1985.** In Search of the Trojan War. London: Penguin Books and BBC Books.

**-Wood, B. and Cotton, J. 1999.** The Representation of Prehistory In Museums. *In* Merriman, N. (ed.) Making Early Histories in Museums, Leicester and New York: Leicester University Press, 28-43.

**-Woodward, K. 1997.** Concepts of Identity and Difference. *In* Woodward, K. (ed.) Identity and Difference. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications and The Open University, 7-50.

**-Yalouri, A. E. 2001.** The Acropolis : Global Fame, Local Claim. Oxford and New York: Berg.

**-Yates, T. 1990.** Jacques Derrida: “There is nothing outside of the text”. *In* Tilley, C. (ed.) Reading Material Culture. Structuralism, Hermeneutics and Post-Structuralism. Oxford: Blackwell, 206-280. of Washington Press.

**-Yerushalmi, Y. H. 1982.** Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

**-Zarkia, C. 1996.** Philoxenia: Receiving Tourists-but not Guests-on a Greek Island. *In* Boissevain, J. (ed.) Coping With Tourists. European Reactions to Mass Tourism. Providence-Oxford: Berghahn Books, 143-173.

**-Zois, A. 1996.** Knossos: The Ecstatic Vision. Semiotics and Psychology of an Archaeological Adventure (*Knossos. To Ekstatiko Orama. Simiotiki kai Psychologia mias Arhaiologikis Peripetias*). Heraklion and Athens: Crete University Press. [In Greek]

## *Appendix*



**1. A BRIEF PRESENTATION**  
**OF KINSHIP RELATIONS AND INHERITANCE PRACTICES**  
**IN ARCHANES**

Three forms of kinship bonds are encountered in Archanes as everywhere in Greece: the cognatic kindred, the relation by affinity and the ritual kinship (*koumparia*), i.e. the symbolically important bond between a best man and a married couple or the godparent of a child and its parents. All three types of relations are basic points of reference for a person's self definition. Here they will be briefly described since they have some practical consequences in the negotiation of Archaniote cultural heritage and elucidate, at least partially, the repertoire of kinship concepts used in collective references to the village's past.

In Archanes there are no *yeni*, that is kin groups or lineages organised around the genealogical importance of agnates such as those described elsewhere in Crete (Herzfeld 1983, Tsantiropoulos 2004). For instance, in the Cretan mountain communities of Glendi and Livadi, these agnatic groups are recognised on the basis of one surname (or nickname) once established locally by a man considered the ancestor of the *yenos* (or *soi*, or *flega*, see Tsantiropoulos 2004: 161). The *yeni* (in plural) are also corporate for political purposes (Herzfeld 1983: 157) and economic reasons which have to do with the access to and inheritance of pasture lands. In order to ensure their position, the male members of each *yenos* try to construct a net of acquaintances and alliances with people having political and social power. These are further consolidated through arranged marriages and, mainly, through links of ritual kinship. The fervent competition between *yeni* and *ipoyeni* or *siries* (sublineages, see Tsantiropoulos 2004: 161, 171) finds its expression in animal-rustling, the observable performance of masculinity, their conflicting attitudes at local elections, the apparent and often discursively justified neglect of the state law (Herzfeld 1985) and, in rare cases, in blood-feuds (Tsantiropoulos 2004).

In contrast, in Archanes, the *soi* is not invested with agnatic meanings. In spite of the undisputed prevalence of an androcentric ideology in the village, the Archaniote *soi*

refers to a person's bilateral kindred (both cognates and affines).<sup>1</sup> The father's side by no means plays a more important role in the transmission of kinship than that of the mother and it has been so since the earliest times my informants could remember. Apart from property, *both* parents bequeath to their children their prestige, their good or bad reputation, their inclinations, and their (undoubtedly gendered) predispositions. Occasionally the term *soi* has the meaning of a *good* family (e.g., "*he is from a soi*", i.e., he comes from a good, rich or respected family), one which a young person, of either sex, would like to enter through marriage.

Some preference for the agnatic line is found on the local system of naming. Traditionally, the first son and daughter were named after the paternal grandparents while the second boy and girl were given the names of the maternal grandfather and grandmother respectively. Often, however, this rule was not followed for a series of reasons, which change the established priority of the four grandparents. Nowadays, young couples mostly name their children after their parents but women have a stronger say concerning whether a couple follows these customary rules<sup>2</sup>, and the maternal grandparents can be honoured with namesakes even before the paternal ones. Totally foreign names (i.e., unrelated to a child's kin) may also be given during the christening ceremony if the parents like them and do not approach the naming system as a highly regarded obligation towards their own parents.<sup>3</sup> Finally, the practice of giving the paternal surname to the children is also changing, albeit very slowly. According to the last family law introduced into Greece in 1984, married women maintain their own surname and do not replace it with that of the husband. Children can take either parent's surname after an officially declared common decision and, although they are usually given the paternal surname, in Archanes, as elsewhere, increasingly more parents give their children both surnames.

---

<sup>1</sup> For the distinction of androcentric ideology from concepts of patriliney in rural Greece and the use of relevant terms, see Herzfeld 1983.

<sup>2</sup> Not accidentally, the adjective used by my informants to describe these types of rules in Greek is "*patroparadotos*", i.e. given by fathers.

<sup>3</sup> As most Archanites told me, it was the father who decided the name of the children. Yet in some cases, especially when the godparent enjoyed a high status, he could decide himself about the name of his godchild. The honourable acceptance of this role by a rich or prominent godfather also constituted a tacit obligation to help the child in later stages of his/her life.

The independent household (*nikokirio*) is the fundamental kin unit and consists of the nuclear family and occasionally with one of the widowed parents, either of the bride or the groom.

The village is not characterised by any particular tendency to endogamy. Even in earlier periods when most marriages were pre-arranged through *sinikesio* (matching), parents were basically interested in securing a good and promising future for their daughters independently from the place of residence of the eventual groom. For this reason, girls from rich Archaniote families often married men from Heraklion, or even émigrés in Athens and the US, provided they were of equal financial status, had a promising job or had received higher education.<sup>4</sup> Poorer girls remained in the village and some got married to non-Archaniote men (mainly from the Messara plain) working here as seasonal farmers and for whom the establishment in rich and famous Archanes appeared as a promising step for their progress.

Kinship relations, especially those resulting from marriage, are extremely important at a social level. Being single is not only undesirable but also thought of as bad luck and failure in the social realm. Parents with unmarried children above the age of 30 also partake in this “social failure” and this is one of the basic topics of discussion in the village, especially amongst women who easily shared with me their sadness about their unmarried children. The same is true for couples *without* children and to a lesser extent for divorced parents, notwithstanding the gradually growing number of divorces and second marriages locally. Also strongly criticised are the adults who neglect their old parents. The social criticism about these issues is such that often single or divorced people move to Heraklion where they feel the pressure of social control less.

Kinship remains important in a variety of other local practices. Children and parents, siblings, brothers-in-law, and ritual kin normally help each other at farming, especially during the harvesting, though many Archaniotes complain that this sensitivity is being lost from year to year. This form of collaboration allows the

---

<sup>4</sup> This is why many Archaniote women moved to Heraklion while very few Herakliote men came to live in Archanes (before 1990). In other words, it was more likely for a woman to leave agricultural activities at marriage rather than for a resident in a large urban centre to move to a village and become involved in farming.

development of reciprocal moral obligations and solidarity with some kin and, principally, the avoidance of extra expenditure for the payment of seasonal workers who – according to the locals – are not able to sympathise with a land owner and have no feelings for other people’s lands (“*den ponane ti yi*”). Collaboration with bilateral kin, a commonplace in most Mediterranean societies (Just 1998), is also somewhat customary in the commercial sector as well as in the conscious choice of Archaniotes to frequent the shops of their kin, showing in fact their commitment to supporting “their own people” and thus forming interconnected economic and social groupings.

I must stress, however, that although used by the locals to justify some of their choices, in reality kinship never determines them. As Just has pointed out about the island of Meganissi (1998: 315-6), where he conducted extensive fieldwork, kinship outside a household is basically a series of human values through which the villagers’ actions are rhetorically evaluated; but it can never fully explain them.

## **2. DOWERING AND INHERITANCE PRACTICES IN ARCHANES**

When they decide upon marriage to stay in Archanes, the spouses move to their own house, which can be anywhere in the village or its area. Uxorilocal and virilocal households are rare and, despite the fact that parents often wish to live near or with their children, all admit that a new family needs to have its own separate household.

Parents bequeath their property to all of their children, sons and daughters. Yet the basic obligation of parents was, until relatively recently, to dower their daughters; the latter received the largest shares of the paternal estates because “they had to be settled” (“*epepe na apokatastathoun*”<sup>5</sup>). A dowry was thought of as the bride’s financial contribution to the new household as long as most women were dependent on their husbands’ income for the rest of their lives. It consisted of farming land (when the couple did not move outside the village), cash, if possible, and certainly of the trousseau and other necessary items for the new home (e.g., furniture, linen, decorative objects). Women who married outside Archanes, i.e., to men living in urban centres, were additionally provided with an apartment or a shop, the rent of which offered extra money to the family.

Yet the bride’s parents did not provide the new couple’s house, contrary to other places in Crete, particularly in the cities (see for example Herzfeld 1991: 138-143). What was an absolutely necessary part of any dowry given locally was farmland. On this, a man could rely in order to make a living for himself and his new family.<sup>6</sup> A man could receive some extra plots from his own parents either at marriage or as inheritance, divided to the male heirs according to the parents’ will (usually the father’s) or by lot, a common practice in rural Greece by which fraternal conflict has been avoided (Herzfeld 1980). One of the family sons usually inherited the parental

---

<sup>5</sup> All words in quotation marks of this section are phrases I repeatedly heard from many of my informants during a return visit to the village in October 2005.

<sup>6</sup> At a later phase of course, he could buy himself more land or earn money by cultivating the land of others (even that kept by his parents, called “goneiko”, i.e., “paternal”) and sharing with them the money of the harvested products. This widespread practice of sharing the products between a landowner and a cultivator is called “simmisaka”, literally meaning “halves together”.

house<sup>7</sup> after the parents' death and/or his shop, in the case, of course, that the father had one.<sup>8</sup> A father normally preferred his eldest son to inherit his house so that his name could continue and always be heard in the same house (e.g., "this is the house of Giorgis Bilitakis, grandson of Giorgis Bilitakis, etc.).<sup>9</sup>

Apparently, at an early time that some old people remember or know due to their interests in local history, the house was built or provided by the groom's parents or by the groom himself.<sup>10</sup> This situation bears some affinities with that described in the shepherd communities of western Crete mentioned above (Herzfeld 1980: 94), where agnatic solidarity directs the groom's family to cater for the son's new family house. There are several stories told in Archanes about men who remained engaged for five or ten years and dwelt with their parents-in-law, according to the local saying "they had a common pot" (*"ihan kino tsikali"*), i.e., they all cooked together until the stone-built house was ready and the young couple could get married and move into it. Nevertheless, without exception, to my question about whether after the Second World War it was the bride who had to provide the house as part of her dowry or the groom, all Archaniotes agreed that there was no such clear rule or custom concerning the issue. The provision of the couple with a house depended on a variety of circumstances: "Which family of the two already owned a second house to give to the son or the daughter?" "If there was not such a second house to be given, then which one of the two families involved could offer a land plot or the money (or both)

---

<sup>7</sup> Again, the adjective used in this case is "patriko" i.e., house belonging to the father, even if it passed to the father through his wife's dowry.

<sup>8</sup> Shop-owners usually had at least one of their sons working with them from an early age, making the transfer of the shop from father to son a reasonable step for the continuation of the business. Nevertheless, all shop-owners also had (and still do) farmland that they have cultivated in order to either ensure the annual quantities of oil and wine they need or sell their products to the cooperative.

<sup>9</sup> However, the youngest son could also inherit the house if, when unmarried, he lived with the parents in the house and looked after them (cf. Tsantiropoulos 2004: 75 footnote). Moreover, one of a family's daughters could also receive the paternal house, either as dowry or as inheritance. In some cases, when the father was not alive and the house was big enough, it could be divided into two parts in order to be given as dowry to two female siblings, one of which should look after the widowed mother.

<sup>10</sup> This was certainly the case of men with many sisters who had enough time to prepare a new house since they had to wait until all female siblings got married.

for a new construction?” “Was the future spouse an orphan?”<sup>11</sup> There are many cases in which the house was built or offered by the bride’s family (some of which are recorded in Archanote marriage contracts kept in the Heraklion public archives) even in the period before WWII, when, according to the information noted above, the house was built by the groom in anticipation of his marriage.

---

<sup>11</sup> In this case, the bride was given a house in order to feel more secure. This could be the parental house itself with the widowed parent remaining at his/her house together with the couple.

### **3. THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES OF ARCHANES** **MENTIONED IN THE THESIS<sup>12</sup>**

#### **1. The “palace”, or “palatial building” (Fig. 73)**

This fenced excavation – also visible from the small street on its west side – lies in the Tourkogitonia (“Turkish Quarter”) near the main church of Archanes. It constitutes the most important building of the Minoan town of Archanes and it is believed to have been destroyed in 1450 BC, at the same time as other Minoan structures. Its northern entrance has been uncovered, as has a section of the eastern wing. Many objects, some of which are of great historic and artistic value as well as other important data (remains of food, herbs, evidence of a catastrophic fire, etc.) were brought to light recently, revealing that Archanes was an important centre in the area which possibly controlled the roads leading from Knossos to southern Crete.

#### **2. Fourni, the cemetery (Fig. 76)**

Lying on a hill (1.5km to the southwest of the village), it was extensive and remarkably organised. Its name comes from the form of one vaulted tomb reminiscent of a kiln (in Greek “fournos”, in Cretan dialect “fourni”) which remained above ground for centuries (Fig. 77) allowing local shepherds to use it as a shelter.

The cemetery was in use between 2500 and 1250 BC, approximately. The rich and numerous funeral gifts, most of which are kept in the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion, include several small objects in gold, bronze and ivory, masterpieces of design and workmanship. As the excavators have often stressed, the first intact, i.e., unlooted, “royal” tomb in Crete was found here and it belonged to individuals of

---

<sup>12</sup> For archaeological information about the Archanian sites, see Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 2002, and the volumes *Archanes: Minoan Crete in a New Light* (1997, by the same authors), published in the context of an exhibition in Athens with the same title. Here basic information is provided in order to contextualise the social references to the ancient past.



noble status. Other tombs have yielded gold and silver jewellery, finely worked seals, figurines, pots, etc., which now symbolise Archanes in a series of representations such as in books of local history, post cards, in the logo of the local council, etc.

### **3. Anemospilia, the Minoan temple (Fig. 78)**

Five kilometres southwest of Archanes on the northern side of Mt Juktas, a sanctuary divided into three sections and a long front corridor was discovered in 1979. In the sanctuary, Y. Sakellarakis found an altar and ritual utensils, even two life-size clay feet likely belonging to a worshipped statue. However, the most controversial finds of the sanctuary, already discussed in chapter 4, were the four human skeletons, one of which had a bronze sword on its breast. The archaeologist suggested that one of them had been a victim of a ritual sacrifice, presumably in order to appease the agitated earth and stop the threat of earthquakes (Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 2002: 136-156). According to this interpretation, which is also given in the local museum under the title “Drama of Death in a Minoan Temple” and in relevant graphics published in the *National Geographic* in 1981 (Fig. 79) and other international journals, the sacrifice proved futile since a stronger earthquake finally destroyed the building, the collapse of which was responsible for the death of the priest.

## *Figures*



**Fig. 1.** The archaeological site of Knossos: The “Palace” from the Southeast.  
(Source: A. Vassilakis, Knossos, Athens: Adam Editions, n.d.: 12. Photographs by  
Y. Yiannelos, C. Adam.)



**Fig. 2.** Sir Arthur Evans in front of the North Entrance of Knossos.  
(Source: Brown 1983: 73)





**Fig. 3.** Knossos in 1901. A large part of the palace was already unearthed. In the foreground, the houses of the modern settlement.

(Source: Brown 1983: 38)



**Fig. 4.** The *Throne Room* with its alabaster seat, its benches and some fresco fragments on the walls, as found in 1900.

(Source: Brown 1983: 44)



**Fig. 5.** During his life Evans ordered several copies of this chair. Here he stands between a jar and a cast of the Knossian throne. On the walls, reproductions of the restored frescoes. From an exhibition in Burlington House, London, 1936 of Evans's Minoan collection.  
(Source: Brown 1983: 16)

## Jazz, Corsets and Bathtubs in Old Knossos 5000 Years Ago

**Fig. 6.** Minoan cultural features worthy of attention in 1922.  
(Headline in the *American Weekly*, 13/11. Source: Farnoux 1996: 101)





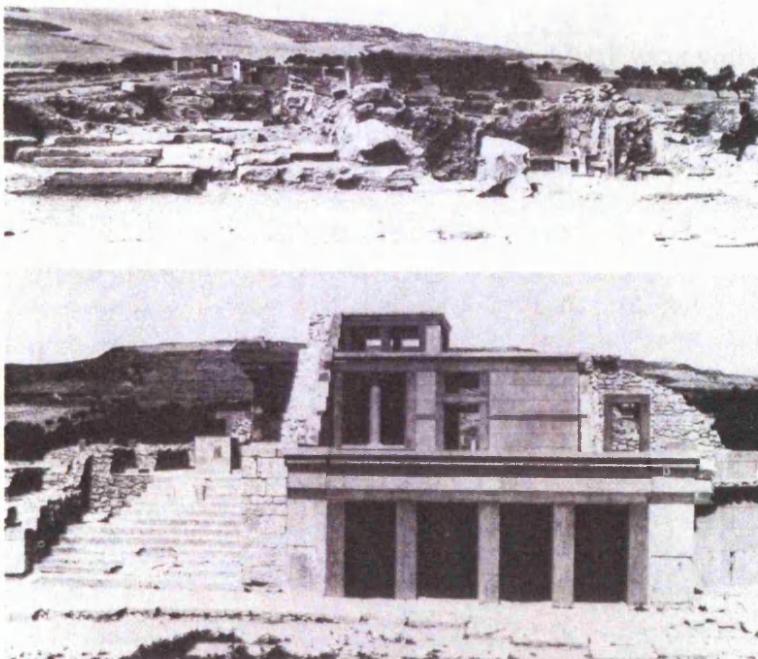
**Fig. 7.** Graphic reconstruction of the North entrance to the palace, according to Evans. Watercolor by Piet de Jong. Today it is considered one of the most characteristic expressions of Art Deco. Together with other watercolours by de Jong it accompanies the exhibition of the Knossian finds at the Museum of Heraklion.  
(Source: Farnoux 1996: 112)



**Fig. 8.** Minoan ladies having a chat in what Evans described as the “Queen’s apartments”. From Evans’s main publication, *The Palace of Minos* (1921-1936).  
(Source: Farnoux 2003: 112)



**Fig. 9.** The restoration of the Grand Staircase, a major technical achievement (1905). Evans stands at the back wearing a white suit. Next to him, his assistants Mackenzie (with the pith helmet) and Doll.

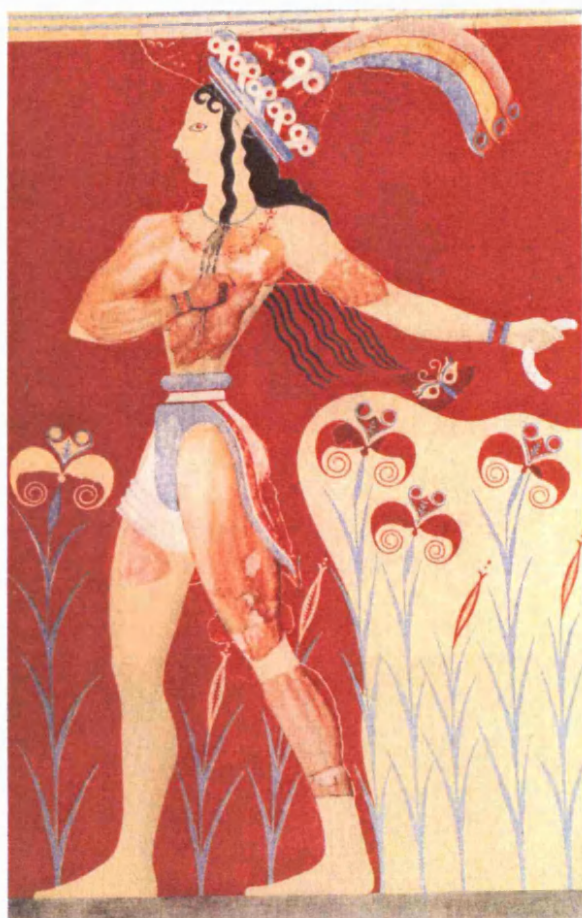


**Fig. 10.** The Throne Room in 1900 and after its reconstruction with reinforced concrete in 1930. (Source: Brown 1983: 52)





**Fig. 11.** The “South Propylaea” of Knossos as restored by Evans with a copy of the “Cup-bearer” fresco on the wall. The yellow concrete indicates the possible place of wooden beams in Bronze Age times.  
(Postcard by V. Drossos)



**Fig. 12.** “The Prince with the Lilies” (or Priest-King), as seen today at the site of Knossos. Reconstruction by E. Gillieron fils, 1926. Published in “The Palace of Minos” (Vol. II, col. Pl. XIV).  
(Source: Sherratt: 2000: 10)



**Fig. 13.** Proposed reconstruction as three separate figures by W.-D. Niemeier 1987.  
(Source: Sherratt: 2000: 19)



**Fig. 14.** Wooden corridors defining the visitors' itinerary.  
(Source: Fakidis 1997)



**Fig. 15.** People queuing in front of the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion.



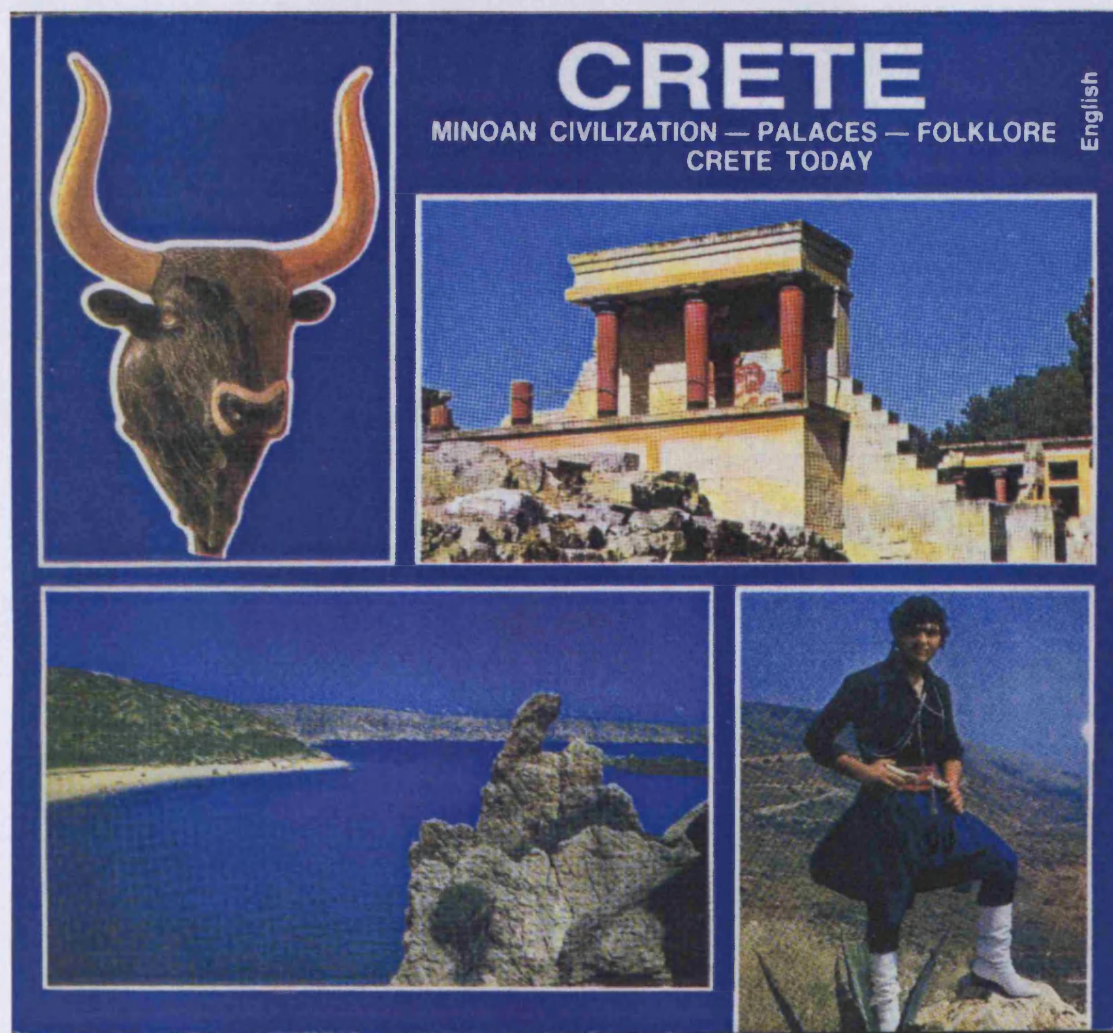
**Fig. 16.** The museum's interior in the 1920s.  
(Source: Farnoux 1996: 104)



**Fig. 17.** Graphic reconstruction of the Knossos Palace by G. Lappas and J. Sardelli (1984). (Consultants: N. Marinatos and R. Hägg.) The picture includes some dancers in front of the palace and implies a harmonious relationship between people and rulers (Klynne 1998: 7). The hanging gardens were added in front of the West façade without the consultants' approval, perhaps a projection of Renaissance and present-day palaces.

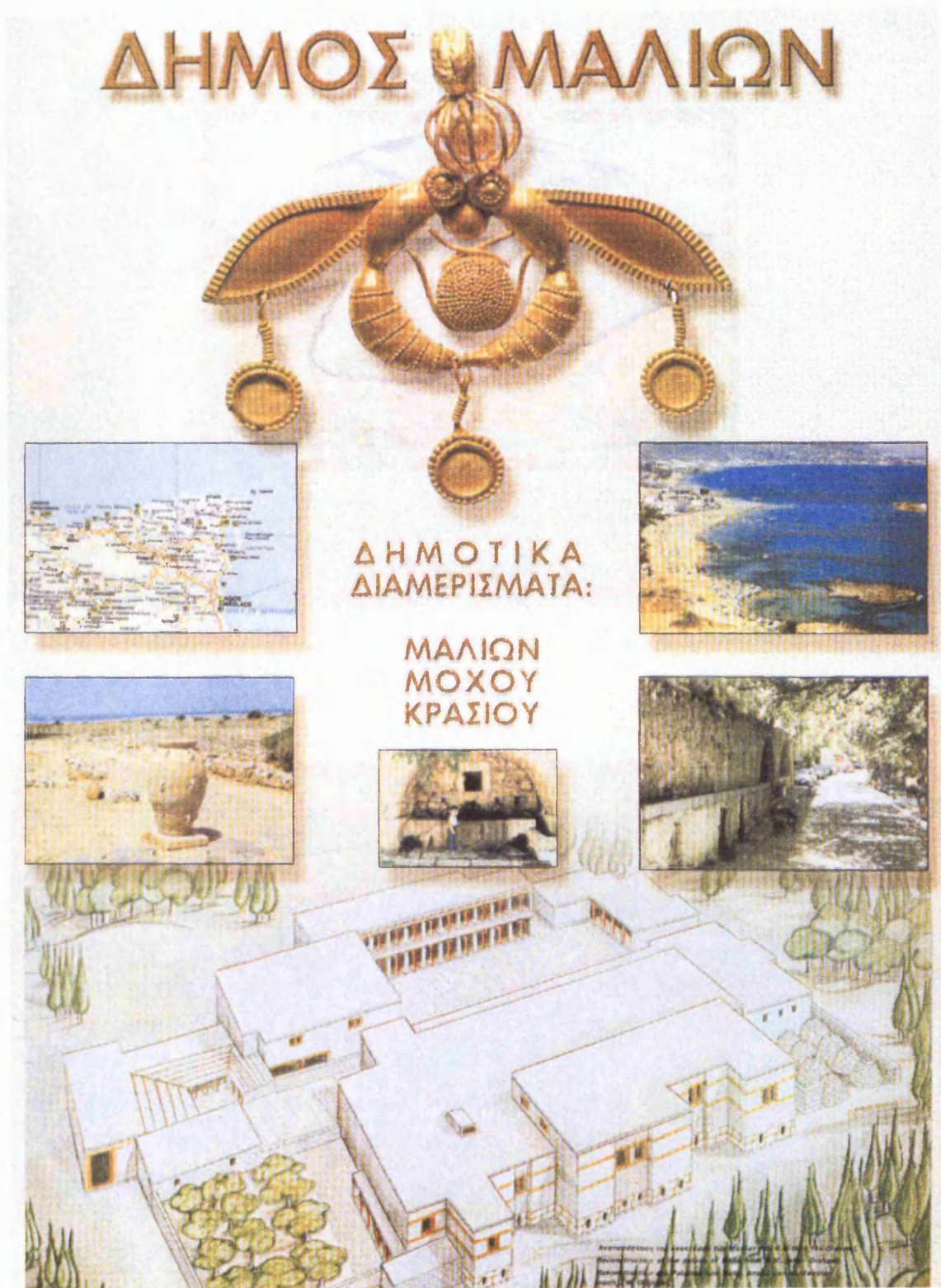
(Postcard and poster. Mathioulakis Editions)





**Fig. 18.** Cover of a guide on Crete.  
(V. Drossos Editions)





**Fig. 19.** The golden pendant from Malia, Crete, at the centre of a tourist brochure on the area.



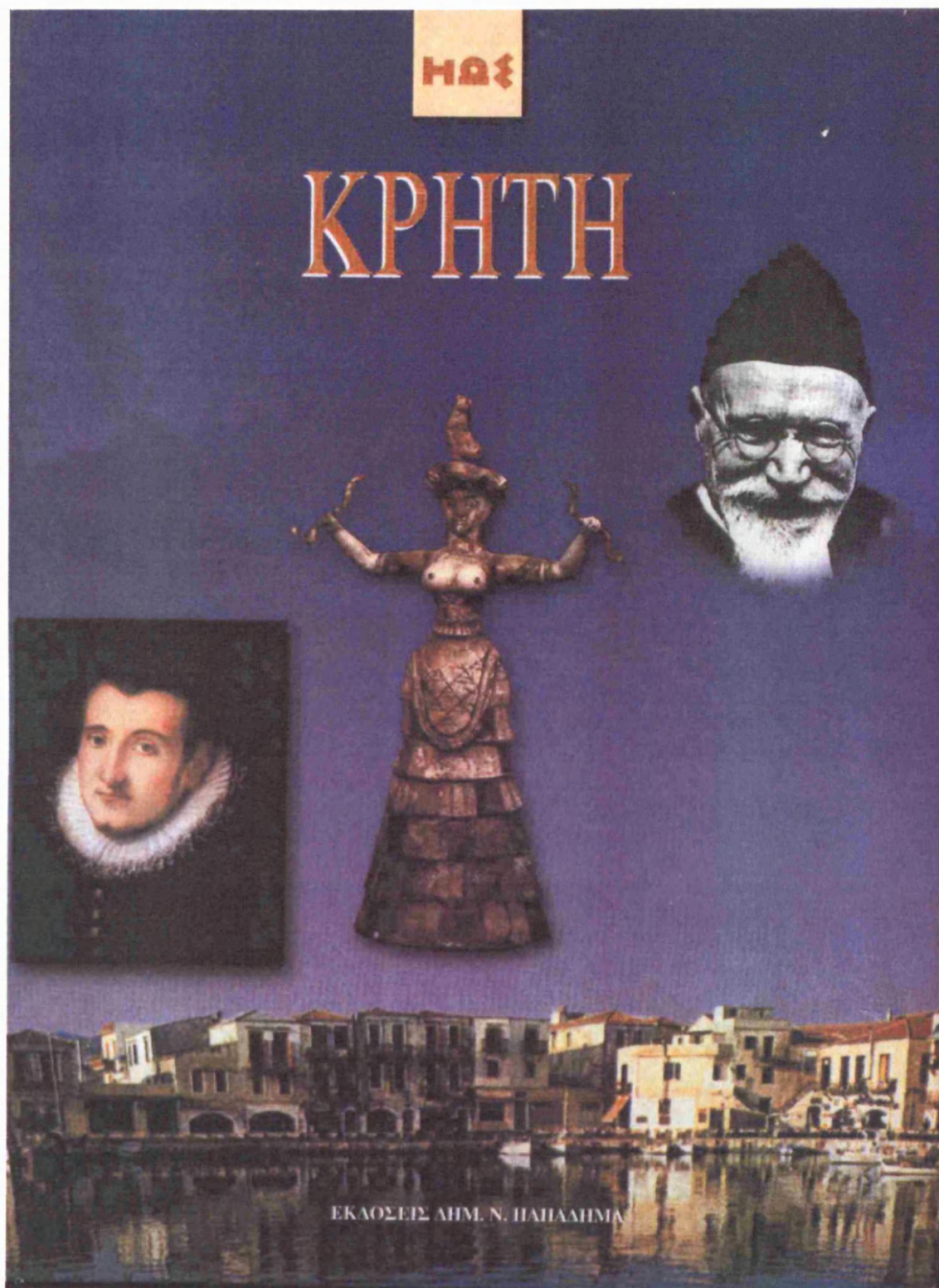
**Fig. 20 and 21.** Crete condensed around the North Entrance of Knossos  
(Postcards. Haitalis Editions)



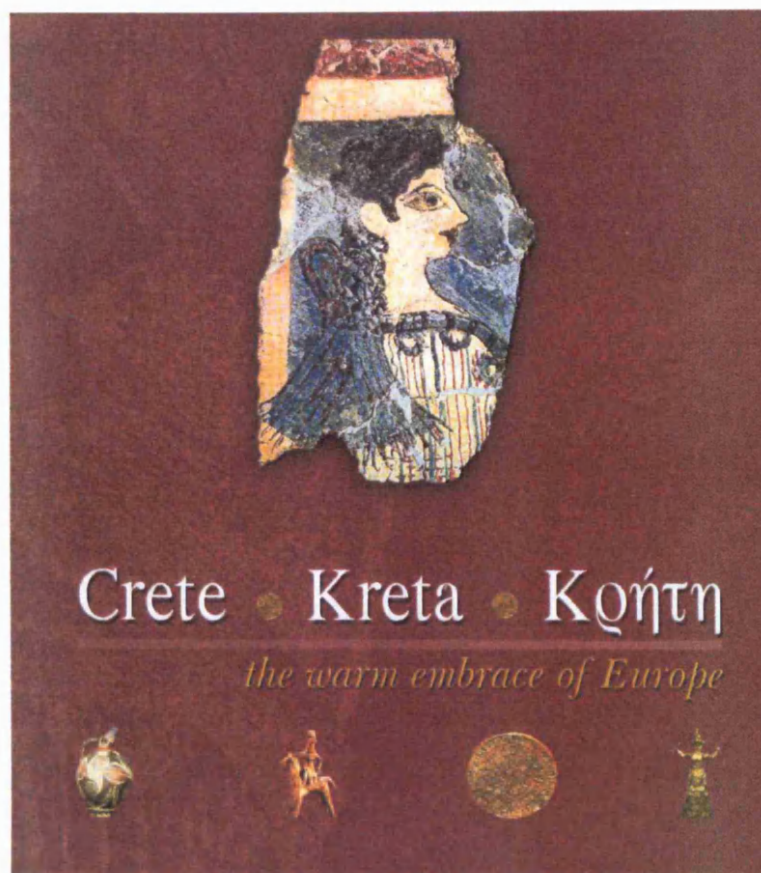


**Fig. 22.** Cretan girls eating grapes. In the foreground, the site of Knossos.  
(Source Kofou 1989: 6)

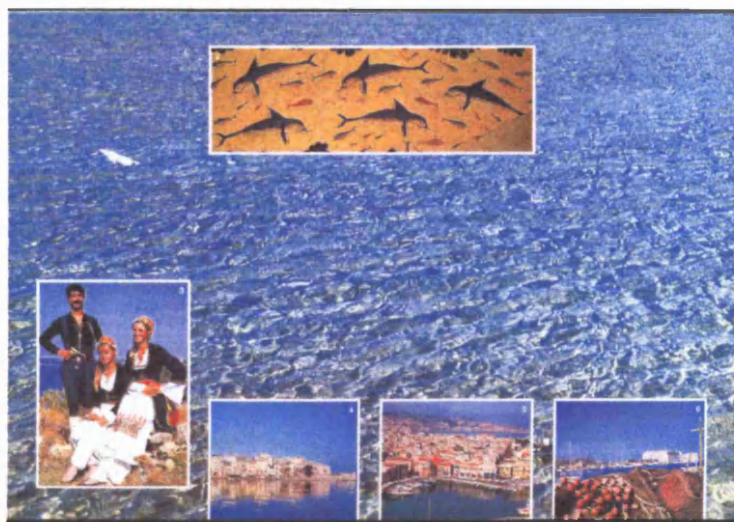




**Fig. 23.** An encyclopaedic volume on Crete.  
(Papageorgiou 2001, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1964)

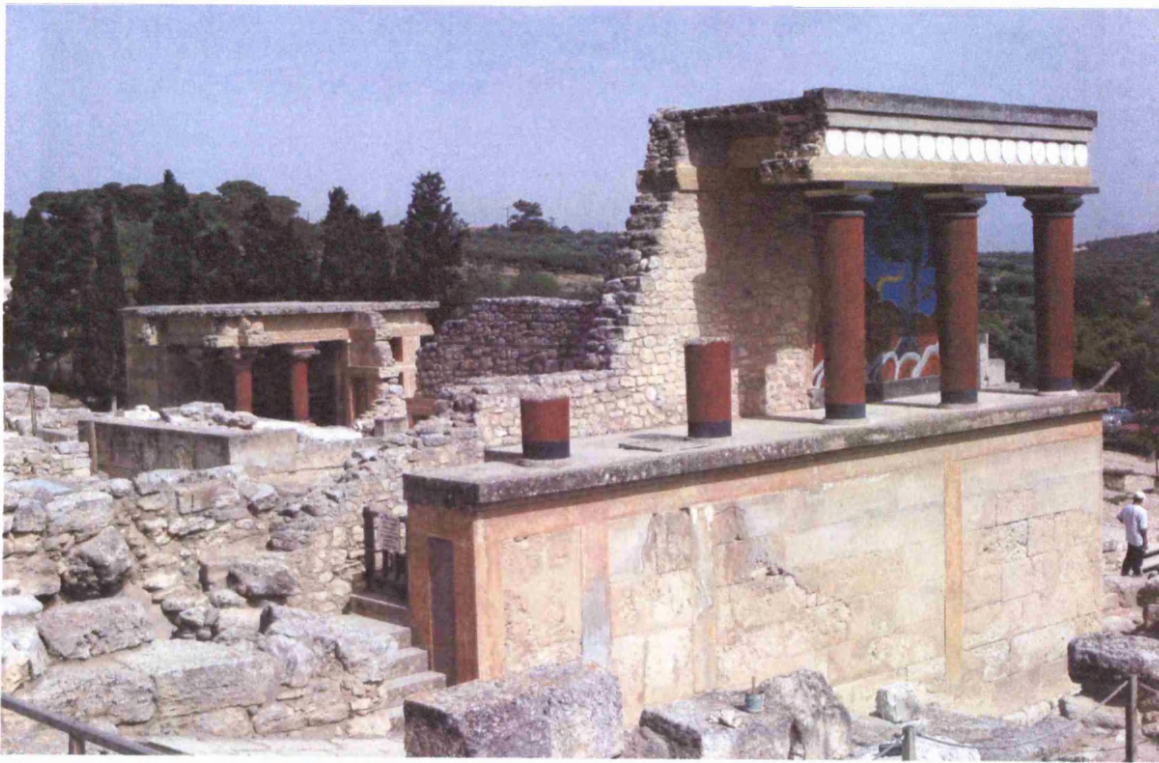


**Fig. 24.** “Crete: The warm embrace of Europe” and its emblems.  
(Brochure. Prefecture of Heraklion)



**Fig. 25.** A montage combining Minoan art with the Cretan sea.  
(Brochure. Greek Tourism Organisation)





**Fig. 26.** The famous North Portico at Knossos.  
(Source: Eurokinissi)



**Fig. 27 and 28.** Aesthetic changes in the postcards of Knossos. Below: The “King’s Megaron” (1970s). Above: minimising the effect of the concrete by including the natural environment in the picture (late 1990s).  
(Both postcards by V. Drossos)



**Fig. 29.** The main gate of the Badisches Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe, during the exhibition “In the Labyrinth of Minos”, 27-1 to 29-4-2001. Minoan ideograms in official presentations of the “First High Civilisation in Europe”  
(Photo by the author)



**Fig. 30.** Minoan versus...neoclassical. From the same exhibition.  
(Photo by the author)



**Fig. 31.** The memorial at Heraklion (built in the 1920s) reproduces a building as seen on a Knossian fresco. The pitiful state of the memorial has contributed to its exclusion from everyday social practices.  
(Source: Farnoux 2003: 38)



**Fig. 32, 33.** Receiving foreigners at the port of Heraklion. A “labyrinth” with altars and double axes was constructed on the occasion.  
(Source: Local newspaper “Tolmi”, 17-11-2000, 1 and 7)

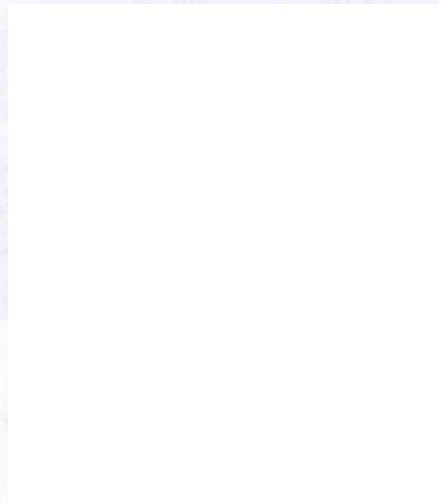




**Fig. 34.** Copies of copies: Knossos columns in a modern block of flats in the centre of Heraklion.  
(Photo by the author)



**Fig. 35.** Red columns in modern constructions.



**Fig. 36.** The Phaistos disk which according to some specialists contains the ideograms of a song. Here it may well allude to the Cretan passion for music: “The Minoan music-school”. (Advertisement)



**Fig. 37.** Minoan signs (colour red, Phaistos disc, consecration horns) connoting the Cretan organisation of a commercial exhibition.





**Fig. 38.** Potters at work in 1910 as photographed by Evans's assistants.  
(Source: Brown 1983: 67)



**Fig. 39.** "Minoan Roots". Presenting the art of the Thrapsaniote potters on a local newspaper.  
(Source: Local newspaper "Tolmi", 20-8-2002: 18)



**Fig. 40, 41.** Aesthetic and cultural syncretism: Minoan scenes and motifs combined with traditional folkloric patterns. From a children's book on Minoan Crete.  
(Source: Tahataki, n.d.: 64, 23)





Πομπή απο το χορόδραμα "Μινωική Τελετουργία"

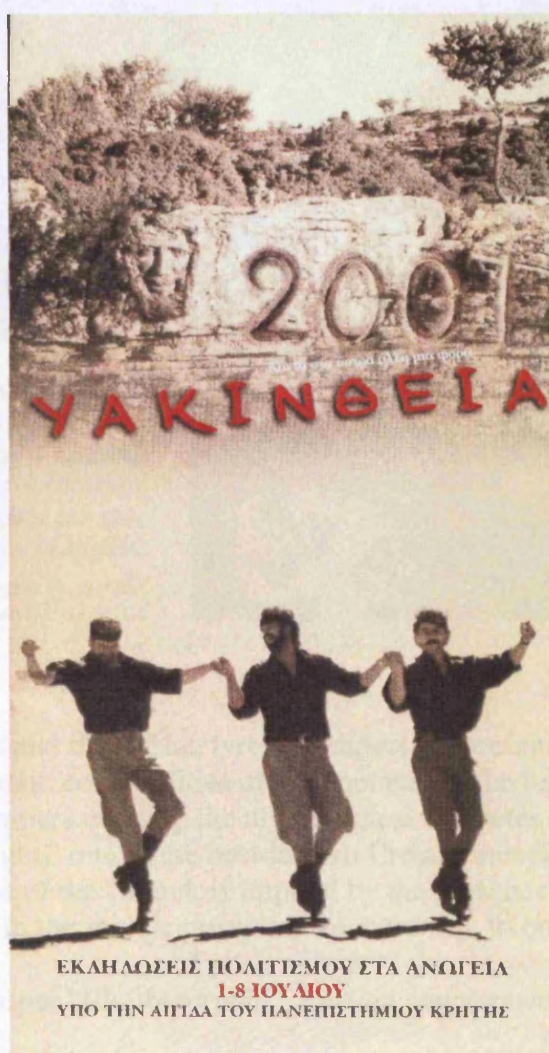
**Fig. 42.** Procession from the "Minoan Ritual". In the forefront a reproduction of the so-called "Tripartite Shrine" at Knossos.  
(Source: Local newspaper "I Allagi" –Feb. 1997)



**Fig. 43.** Girls in Minoan costumes dancing the "geranos".  
(Source: From the programme of the show)



**Fig. 44.** Asking the hot question concerning the birthplace of Zeus: “In the Idean or the Dictaen (cave)?”  
(from a local newspaper)



**Fig. 45.** Zeus and folk dances in a festival named after the recently discovered Greek-Orthodox saint of love, St Giacynthus. Giacynthia Festival, The Programme of cultural activities (2001).



## Υάκινθος και λύρα κρητική



**Fig. 46.** “Giacynthus and the Cretan lyre”: Gendered representations of a diachronic culture in the mountain communities of Milopotamos. The festival’s protagonists: dancers and drummers evoking the mythological Kouretes of the Idean cave. Psaradonis (above right), one of the best-known Cretan musicians, often called “The son of Zeus”. The role of the Church is implied by the presence of a priest (above left) while the olive tree in the middle providing an extra link to both ancient and recent Cretan culture.

(Source Newspaper “Eleftherotypia”, *Epsilon supplement*, June 2001: 24)



Fig. 47, 48. Minoan imagery on Cretan products: herbs, honey and wines.

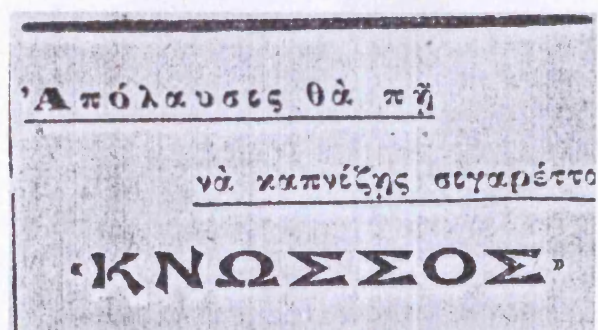


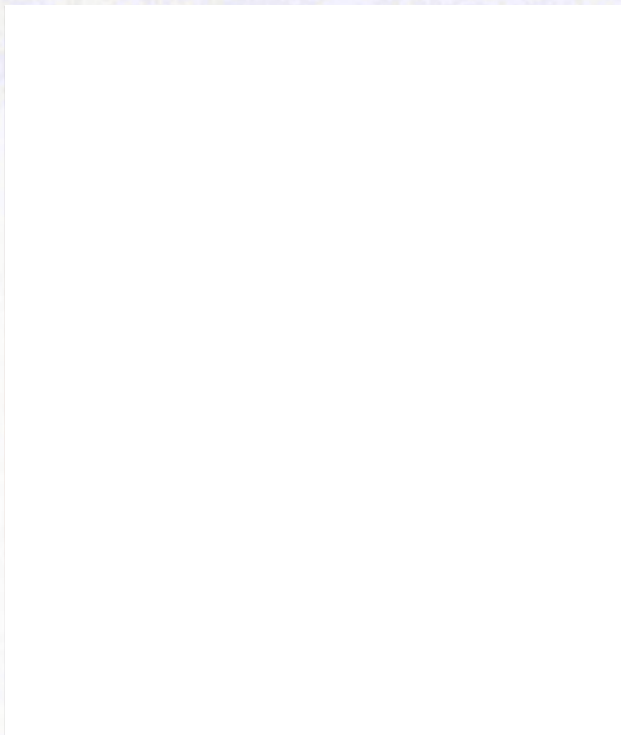
Fig. 49. An old advertisement found in a local newspaper: "Pleasure means smoking the cigarettes 'Knossos'"

(Source: "Local newspaper "Idi", 9-5-1921: 1)





**Fig. 50.** Cretan recipe books.  
(Advertisement)



**Fig. 51.** “Lose weight...critically (or in the Cretan way)”  
(Advertisement)



**Fig. 52.** The most popular image of Knossos.  
(Graphic reconstruction sold in poster)

**Fig. 53.** Sitting on the "Throne of Minos". A Chinese official and his wife enjoying a  
rest privilege.  
(Source: Farra online)





**Fig. 53.** Sitting on the “Throne of Minos”: A Chinese official and his wife enjoying a rare privilege.  
(Source: Eurokinnissi)





**Fig. 54.** 50 couples of newly-weds from Germany photographed in front of the North Portico.  
(Source: Eurokinissi)



**Fig. 55.** The Minoan antiquities in the headlines: “A Kamares ware vase was broken”. Concerns about the future of museum exhibits.  
(Local Newspaper “I Allagi”, Feb. 1979).



**Fig. 56.** The funeral of the Minoan antiquities in the Museum of Heraklion. Cartoon by Andreidakis.  
(Source: Local Newspaper “I Allagi”, 25-2-1979: 1)



**Fig. 57.** The protest. “The Antiquities belong to Us”.  
(Source: Local newspaper “I Allagi”, 28-2-79: 1, photo by A. Koulatsoglou)





Fig. 58. “Incredible. Has Icarus become Italian?”  
(Source: Local Newspaper “Nea Kriti”, 7-2-2002:1)



Fig. 59. “Greenaway kills Icarus once again...”  
Cretans and Icarians in common meetings for the defence of the myth  
(Source: Newspaper “Ethnos”, 3-3-2002: 35)





**Fig. 60.** “Ariadnean 2002, Cultural events”. The Pamphlet with the *Parisienne* representing Cretan women.





**Fig. 61, 62.** The landscape of Knossos.

Different perspectives from the hill of St Paraskevi.  
The view to the south (above) and around the palace (below).

(Photos by the author)



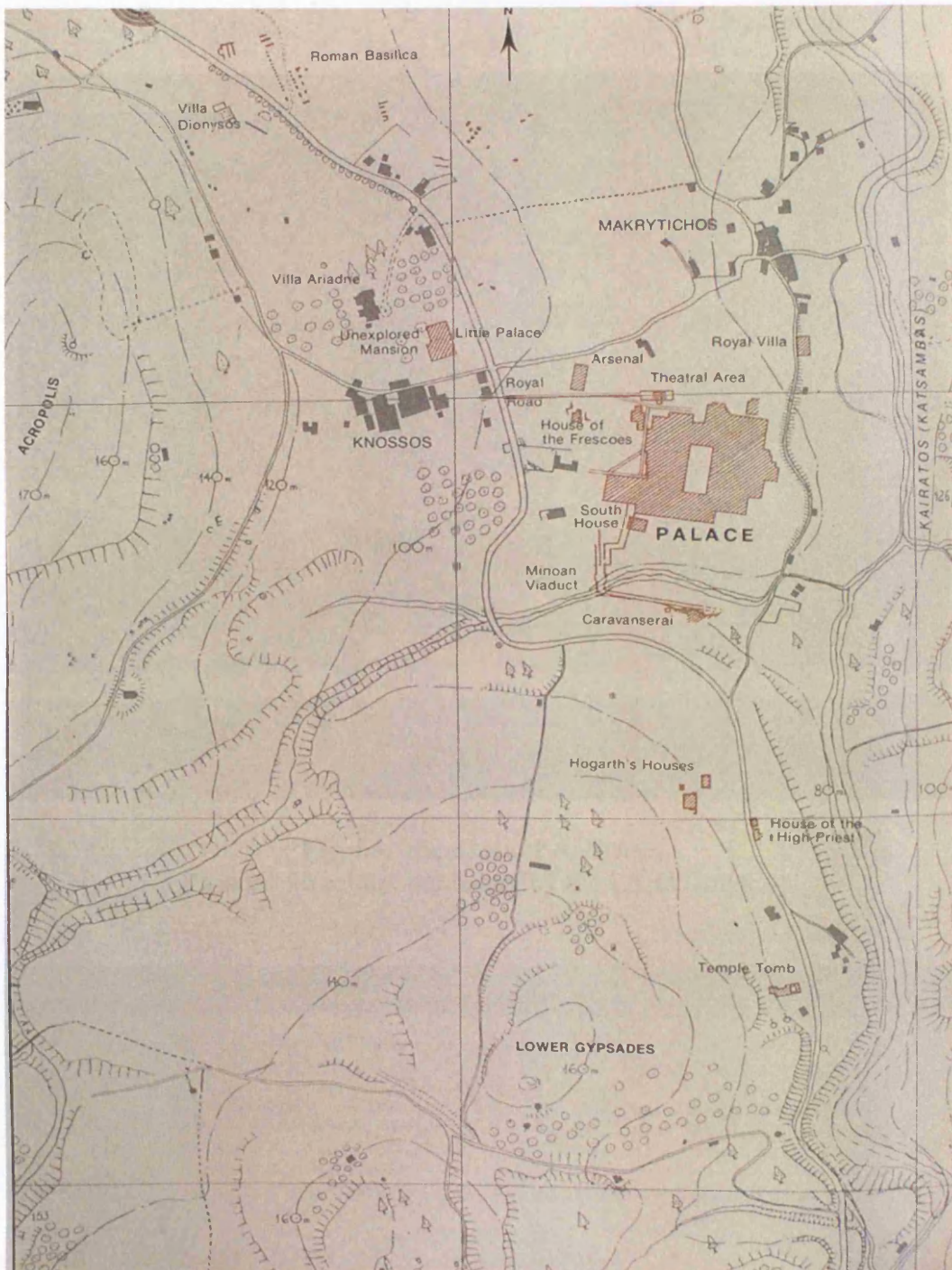


**Fig. 63.** Heraklion, ancient and modern Knossos (the settlement of Bougada Metochi): A difficult relationship.



**Fig. 64.** Borders within borders: The Northern part of the palace, the settlement of Makrytichos, the suburbs of Heraklion and the remaining space with... the olive groves. (Photos by the author)



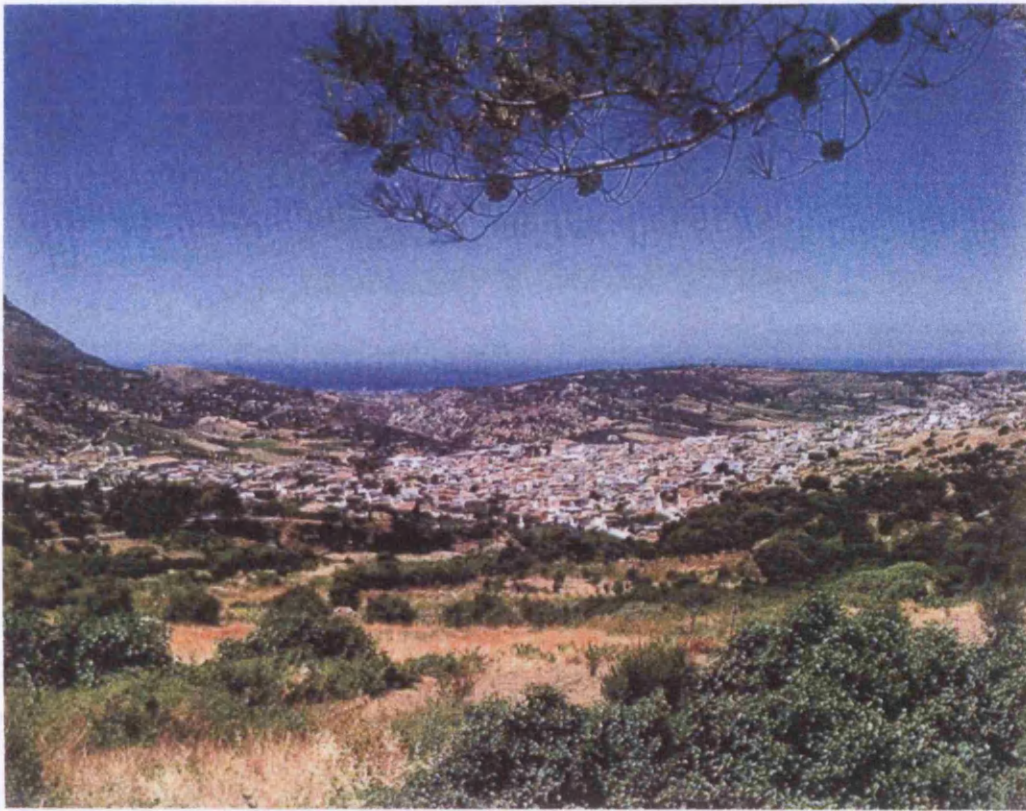


**Fig. 65.** Knossos: the broader area around the archaeological site.

The palace, the river, the settlements of Makrytichos, and Bougadha ("Knossos"), Villa Ariadne, the Royal road ("The most Ancient one in Europe"), A Temple Tomb, the Little Minoan Palace and the road to Heraklion are indicated.

(Source: Michailidou 2002: 38)





**Fig. 66.** The town of Archanes.  
(Source: Brochure published by the Local Council)



**Fig. 67.** Mt Juktas.  
(Source: Logiadou-Platonos 1986: 20)





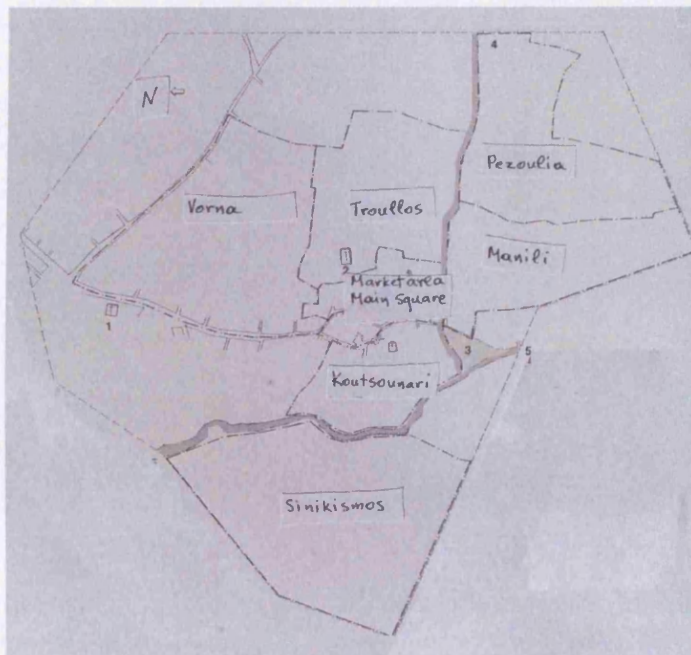
**Fig. 68.** Map showing part of the Heraklion District. Heraklion, Knossos, Archanes and Mt Juktas are highlighted.

(Source: Tzombanaki 2002: 28)





**Fig. 69.** Topographic map of Archanes. 1) The Church of Panaghia (Virgin Mary) 2) The cathedral of St Nikolaos 3) The main square of the village 4) The Creek and 5) The River. (Source: Tzombanaki 2002: 14)



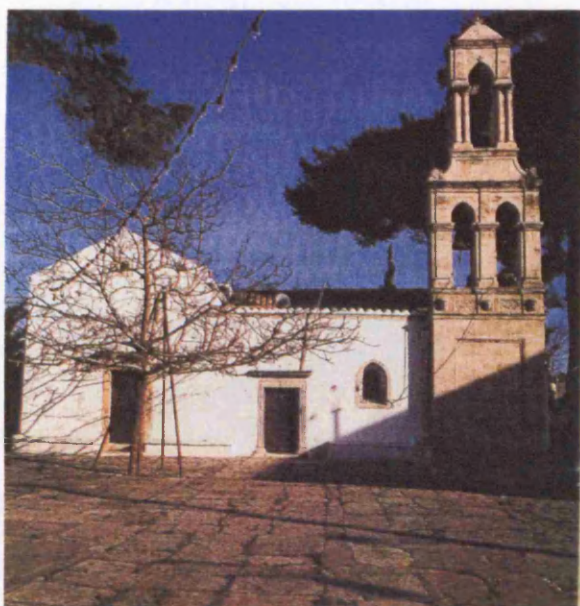
**Fig. 70.** The six major neighbourhoods of Archanes mentioned in the text. (Based on a map of Archanes appearing in Tzombanaki 2002: 38.)



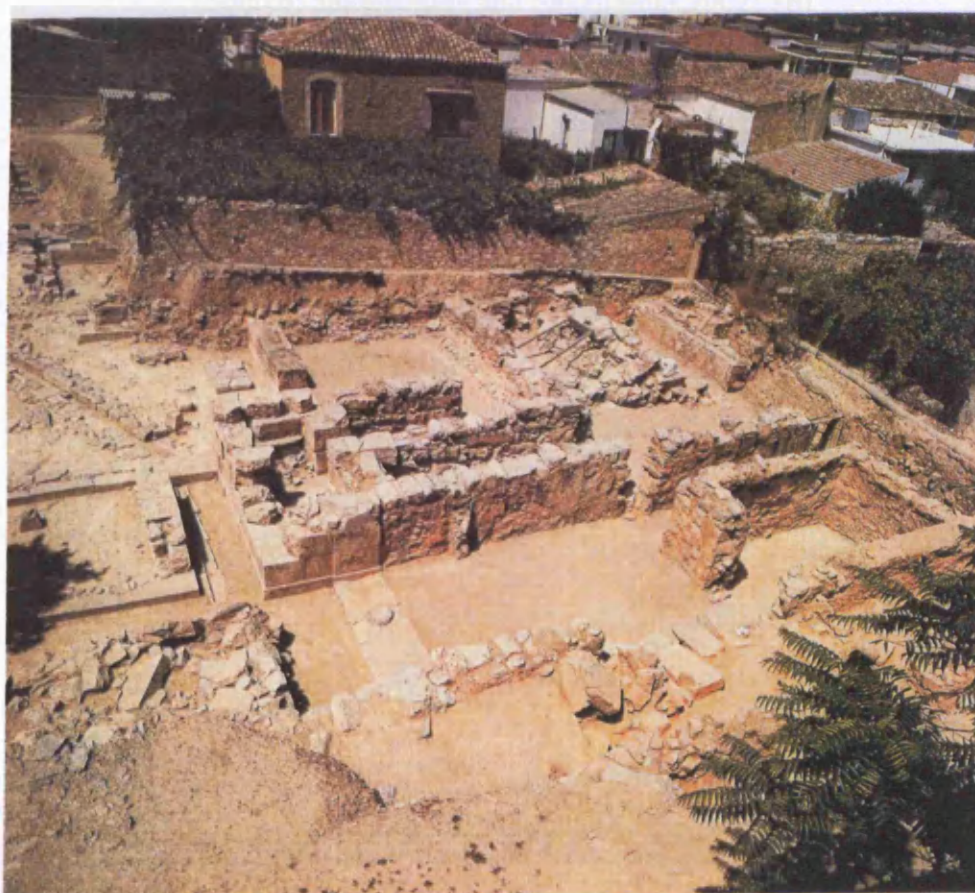


**Fig. 71.** Distribution of 54 *archondika* and important public buildings in Archanes. The importance of the “Nice Road” that crosses the village is obvious with several wealthy residences on both sides.





**Fig. 72.** The church of Panaghia. Archanes.  
(Source: Kofou 1989: 138)

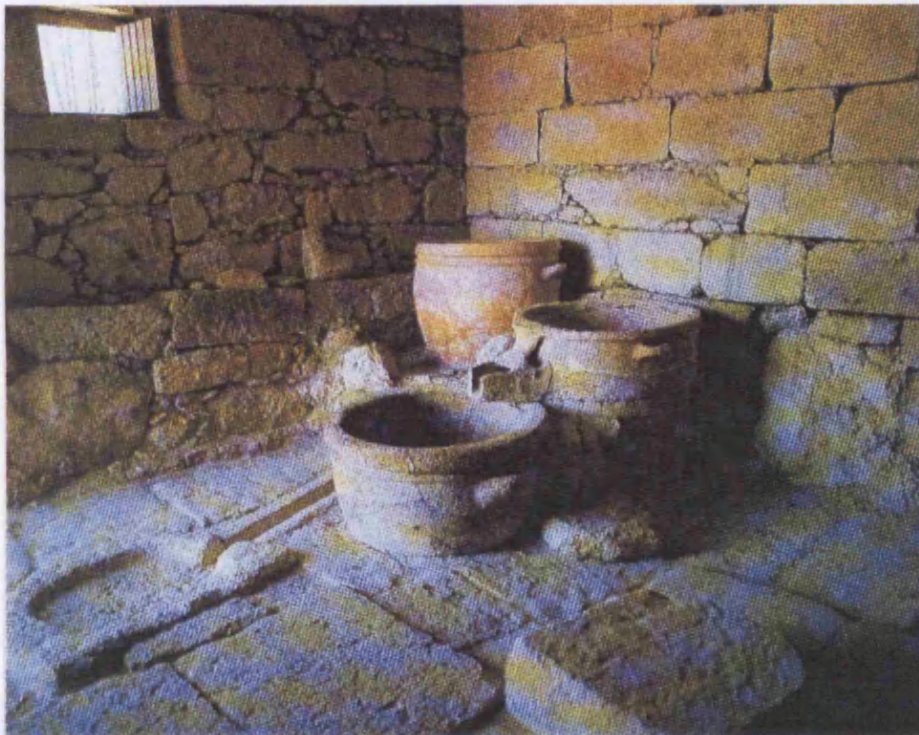


**Fig. 73.** The remains of the "palatial building" at Tourkogitonia, Archanes.  
(Source: Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 2002: 27)





**Fig. 74.** The remains of a Minoan farmhouse. Vathypetro (Archanes).  
(Source: Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 2002: 16)



**Fig. 75.** The wine press at Vathypetro.  
(Source: Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 2002: 17)





**Fig. 76.** Remains of the cemetery at the hill of Fourni, Archanes.  
(Source: Sakellarakis and Sakellarakaki 2002: 91)



**Fig. 77.** The entrance to the Tholos tomb A.  
(Source: Sakellarakis and Sakellarakaki 2002: 73)





**Fig. 78.** The Temple of the human sacrifice at the site of Anemospilia, Archanes.  
(Source: Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 2002: 139)



**Fig. 79.** Graphic reconstruction of the earthquake that destroyed the temple according to its excavator.  
(Source: Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 2002: 147)





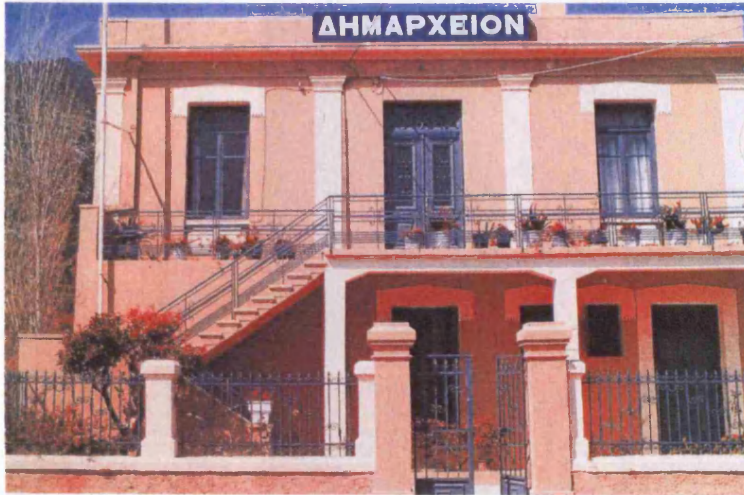
**Fig. 80.** The old school of Archanes, now housing the archaeological collection.  
(Source: Tzombanaki 1992: 30)





**Fig. 82.** “Another Knossos has been discovered”. Newspaper “Elftherotypia”, *Geo magazine* (vol. 32, 18-11-2000).





**Fig. 82.** Neo-classical reminiscences in the organisation of space.  
(Source: Acts Archanes 1992: 12)



**Fig. 83.** The use of stone in the Archaniote houses.  
(Source: Tzombanaki 1992: 26)



**Fig. 84.** The programme of the village's aesthetic upgrading: highlighting the use of stone.

(Source: Acts Archanes 1992: 193)



**Fig. 85.** Performing tradition on modern buildings.

(Source: Acts Archanes 1992: 172)



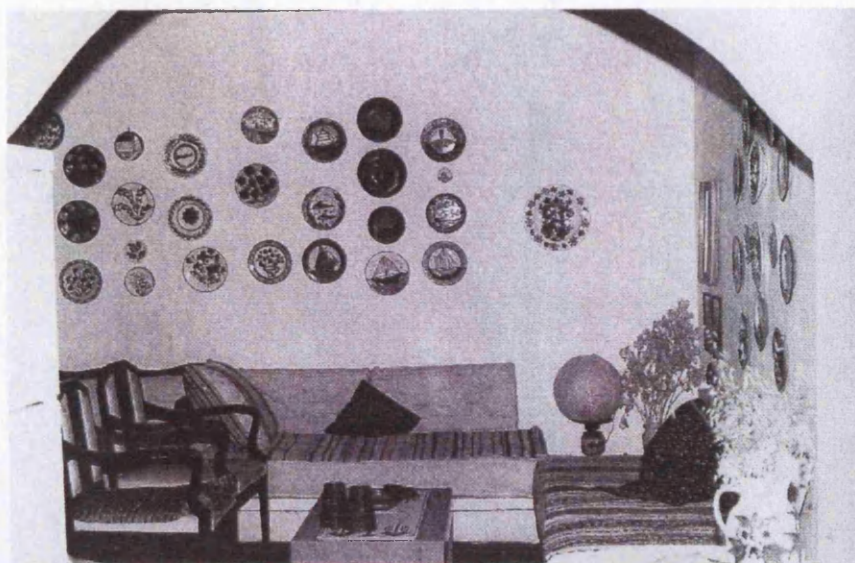


**Fig. 86.** The *archondiko* of Lydakis, Archanes.  
(Source: Tzombanaki 1992: 25)



**Fig. 87.** The “rediscovery “of a traditional material: stone works as part of the conservation programme.  
(Source: Municipality of Archanes)





**Fig. 88.** An old house wine-press transformed into a living room.  
(Source: Doundoulaki-Oustamanolaki 1996: 54)



**Fig. 89.** Stone furniture at the court of an Archaniote house.  
(Source: Doundoulaki-Oustamanolaki 1996: 55)



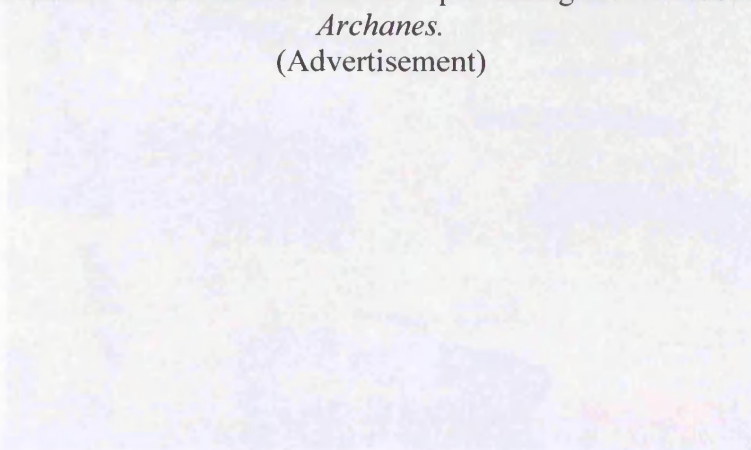


**Fig. 90.** Archanes “upgraded”. A backstreet.  
(Photo by the author)





**Fig. 91.** Archaniote architecture as décor. Experiencing modern facilities at *Villa Archanes*.  
(Advertisement)



**Fig. 92.** The role of the architecture of the modern facilities at *Villa Archanes*.  
(Advertisement)

**Fig. 92, 93.** “Live the authenticity of Cretan hospitality and cooking.”  
The revival of local traditions.  
(Advertisements)



-10- ΕΡΕΥΝΑ ΤΟΥ κ. ΑΡΗ ΠΟΥΛΙΑΝΟΥ ΣΤΗ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΝΝΗΣΟ

Τό γεγονός ότι η πελο-  
ποννησιακή είναι πολύ συγγενική  
μέ τη χιττιπολυβική επιδε-  
κναι να είναι έμμεσα από τα  
άνθρωπολογικά στοιχεία, με  
των ελξε τρόπο: Σ' αυτή  
την περίοδο του Χαλκού, από  
όλη τη λεκάνη του Αιγαίου,  
από τον Αίον ως την Κρήτη  
και από την ανατολική Έλλά-  
δα ως τη δυτική Μικρά Α-  
σία, επικρατεί ένας ανθρω-  
πολογικός τύπος, ο αιγαιό-  
κοκ, όπως διαφορετικοί με-  
νός από το νεολιθικό οιναι-  
σκό τύπο της Κρήτης που  
περιγράφουμε. Όπως τονί-  
σαμε σε προηγούμενο κη-  
φολοίο, η παλαιότερη έπο-  
χή του Χαλκού συμπίπτει  
μέ τα ιστορικά δεδομένα  
της περιόδου των Πελο-  
ποννησίων. Αυτό φαίνεται να  
είναι το πρώτο σημείο έπα-  
φης γι' αυτόν τον χώρο και  
χρόνο μεταξύ ανθρωπολογί-  
ας και γλωσσολογίας, ώστε  
τά δεδομένα και των δύο έ-  
πιστημών να επιβεβαιώνον-  
ται άμοιβαία. Οι γλωσσολό-  
γοι όμως βρίσκουν περισσώ-  
τερες από μία γλώσσες να  
μιλούνται σ' αυτή την έκτα-  
ση που την κατοικεί προφα-  
νώς ένας ανθρωπολογικός  
τύπος. Οι γλώσσες αυτές  
είναι πολλές, φορές στενά  
συγγενικές, έτσι ώστε σε  
μιά τόσο άοιμακρυμένη έ-  
ποχή να φαίνεται ότι μπο-  
ρεί να συμπίπτουν, μέχρι έ-  
ως σημείου, τα κριτήρια

αίτερα στην ανατολική Κρή-  
τη, στην περίοδο 2.300 -  
2.000 π.Χ. Κι άλλαν «έ-  
νοι» καταφθάνουν άργότε-  
ρα. Αλλά στη Μεσομινωική  
έποχή, όπως έπανεληγμένα  
γράφουμε, έχει ολοκληρωθεί  
η διαδικασία του σχηματι-  
σμού του ανθρωπολογικού  
τύπου, που συναντούμε,  
χωρίς καμιά όλλαγή, μέχρι  
τη μυκηναϊκή έποχή, δηλα-  
δή, μέχρι τότε που οι γλω-  
σσολόγοι ισχυρίζονται ότι οι  
Κρητες άρχισαν να μιλούν  
ελληνικά. Σήμερα έχει άπο-  
δειχθεί γλωσσολογικά ότι η  
μινωϊκή γραφή Β', που ει-  
σφη της γραμμικής γρα-  
φής Β' προώθησε την ίστο-  
ρία της ελληνικής γλώσσας  
περίπου 300 χρόνια και έδω-  
σε άριστά τις έλλειδες που  
είχαν μερικοί «ελληνιστές»,  
μέχρι και τα τελευταία χρό-  
νια, ότι η γραφή Β' κρύβει  
κάποια προελληνική γλώ-  
σσα. Τώρα, σ' ό,τι άφορά την  
έρμηνεια της γραμμικής  
γραφής Α' σαν «λουβιτικής»,  
σύμφωνο μέ την άπόδειξη  
του Πόλμερ, που την ύπο-  
στηρίζουν και οι Χάουκεκ  
και Γκεοργκίεφ, αυτή είναι  
προβληματική και άμφισβη-  
τα ανθρωπολογικά δεδο-  
μενα.

ΠΟΙΑ ΕΙΝΑΙ  
Η ΚΑΤΑΓΩΓΗ  
ΤΩΝ ΚΡΗΤΩΝ

φεραν την καταστροφή (!)  
γύρω στο 2.000 π.Χ., όταν  
Εβραίοι στην Αίγυπτο.  
Τήν ύπόθεση αυτή τη στηρί-  
ζει σε κομμάτια κεραμικής  
(Αίγυπτος κλπ.) που έφε-  
ραν την καταστροφή (!)  
γύρω στο 2.000 π.Χ., όταν  
Εβραίοι στην Αίγυπτο.  
Τήν ύπόθεση αυτή τη στηρί-  
ζει σε κομμάτια κεραμικής  
(Αίγυπτος κλπ.) που έφε-  
ραν την καταστροφή (!)  
γύρω στο 2.000 π.Χ., όταν  
Εβραίοι στην Αίγυπτο.

Οι Μινωίτες έμαθαν  
στούς "Έλληνες... ελληνικά

Fig. 94, 95. "These are the origins of Cretans. The Minoans taught the Greek language... to the Greeks." Poulianos's study (1971) reproduced on the local magazine "Kriti". Above, modern Archnaniotes whose skulls were examined in the context of the same study.





**Fig. 96.** The Archaniote landscape.  
Olive trees in the place of vines: “personal views” from the summit of Mt Juktas.

(Photo by the author)